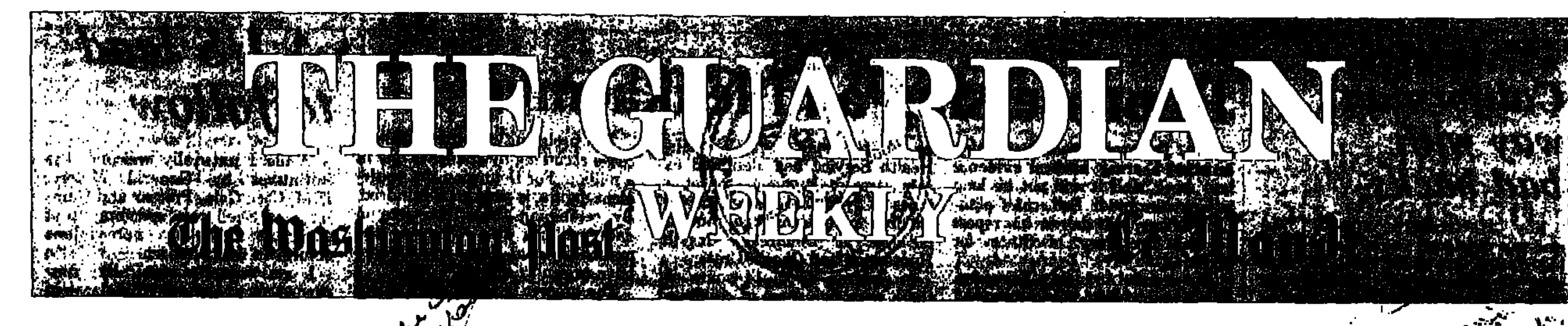


Vol. 135 No. 19 Week ending November 9, 1986

Hopes of further hostage releases

THE REAGAN Administration hopes more hostages will be released in Lebanon, but officials eschewed public comment on the secret contacts, through complex channels, which won Dr David Jacobsen's freedom on Sunday (Report, page 15).

Authoritative sources said that the United States, using the negotiating talents of the Church of England envoy, Mr Terry Waite, and other intermediaries, was engaged in a complicated dialogue with Syria and Iran as well as the Islamic fundamentalist groups holding the 19 or so Western captives, including six remaining Americans.

These sources indicated that the US was not making any specific undertakings to Syria and Iran, in the way that France is alleged to have done. A pro-Syrian magazine in Beirut, Ash-Shiraa, reported on Monday, however, that President Reagan's former national security adviser, Mr Robert McFarlane, visited Tehran secretly last month and discussed with Iranian officials a cessation of support to terrorist groups in exchange for spare parts needed for Iran's U.S.-made war equipment. Mr McFarlane, asked about the magazine report, "categorically" denied that he was in Tehran "last month," and a well-placed diplomatic source in Washington said that resumption of arms sales to Iran would be "unthinkable". According to the paper, Washington is said to have responded *swiftly with supplies transported by four C-130 planes from a base in the Philippines.*

Paying the price

TERRY WAITE'S will be a hard act to follow when, as he proposes, he gives up the post of Anglican envoy extraordinary. Until that happens then sometimes, he says, he will succeed and sometimes fail. The release of Mr David Jacobsen is a less complete success than he had evidently expected. Six American, eight French, possibly two British, and three other nationals remain to be accounted for. Mr Jacobsen looks like a *down payment by the militias for a change* in United States policy, though what that change might be has never been specified. Aid to Iran, such as France has lately given? But in so far as it involves other third parties, the US may be unable to act. Mr Waite was not allowed a visa even to visit Kuwait, which has imprisoned the Shi'ites convicted of terrorism whose release is among the kidnappers' demands. The US implies rather than insists that there have been no negotiations with the kidnappers, and the kidnappers insist that of course there have been. Mr Waite is silent on the point. Without twisting words or staining anyone's honour it looks as though the kidnappers are right on that score.

The release of hostages must depend to some extent on how far the militias are free-standing entities and how far they are answerable to Damascus and Tehran. In the *past President Assad of Syria has been* influential in helping the Americans, but has usually taken the credit by having any hostages released by way of Damascus. Yet the militias have not done his bidding in Beirut itself on the many occasions when he has tried to organise a ceasefire. It is supposed that Mr Assad, after the shock of the Hindawi trial, is putting Syria's best face forward — to the Americans and French, though not to the British. That would not be out of character. The Syrian regime often seems to the outside world to be in an advanced state of schizophrenia which may be related to Mr Assad's own uncertain health and the struggles between *his multiplicity of intelligence outfits.* The simplest explanation for Syria's erratic behaviour is that Mr Assad will not allow anything to happen in the region without his consent. The explanation may indeed be too simple, but it would account for the fact that diplomatically nothing ever moves, either towards a peace settlement or away from it. There is a miserable and bloody state of suspended animation.

Probably Mr Waite, if anybody, knows on what event the release of the remaining hostages now waits, though since the captors represent different fragments of what is generally called Islamic fundamentalism there may need to be more events than one. Clearly, French assistance to Syria *and Iran will help, though at what* price to the rest of French Middle East policy, and Europe's influence as a whole, is impossible to calculate. During the rest of *Mr Waite's endeavours one obvious point* the fundamentalist factions will be making is that they have to be reckoned with. Their teasing of the French, the Americans, and Mr Waite could be as simple as that.

(See Post comment, page 16)



America baffles Europe ...

PAUSE one more time and consider the phenomenon called Ronald Reagan. Six years of power gone, with budget deficits soaring, unemployment *biting* hard down the Eastern Seabourd and through the Mid-West, with the farm states in parlous poverty, the oldest President in American *history has been on the stump again,* striving to rescue enough Republican candidates to keep the Senate safe. Wherever he went there was a warm wash of crowds — many of them young voters. What seemed, a few weeks ago, the end of his luck and charisma — sudden failure at Reykjavik — is now translated into the most potent campaigning weapon. Reagan's refusal to do a deal with Gorbachev is overwhelmingly endorsed in the opinion polls. More wondrous still, the poor, limp vision that is Star Wars has suddenly become a major plus with American voters. They like SDI; they embrace their President's simple homilies. And abruptly you can find Democrats soft-pedalling on the issue, promising — after all — not to shelve the programme when they take office.

'SO I GOT UP FROM THAT TABLE WITH GORBACHEV AND WALKED OUT — AND YOU CAN IMAGINE MY SURPRISE WHEN I FOUND OUT WHAT WE HAD BEEN TALKING ABOUT'

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So, we Europeans — this paper, amongst *others — got it wrong again. That* isn't wrong about Star Wars itself; wrong, rather, about American public opinion; and wrong — for the umpteenth time — about Mr Reagan's *magical ability to spread* sunshine, to turn defeat and incomprehension into victory.

Two reflections follow. One — disheartening, with the Presidential elections only two years away — is the disarray of the Democrats. Still, they have no binding philosophy. Still, they have no commanding national figures. Still, they range from New Deal liberalism to yuppie conservatism. Perhaps that central core can't emerge before some Presidential candidate staggers from the ferocious ordeal of the primary circuit. But there is not even the beginning of coherent identity when you stack the Senate and gubernatorial manifestos end to end across America.

The second reflection returns to Star Wars and Reykjavik. We got it wrong; the BBC and even the sainted ITN got it wrong. Many of America's weightiest East Coast newspapers *got it wrong* as well. Nobody dreamed that the ashes of Reykjavik could be turned into potential triumph for Mr Reagan. And the lesson of that transformation is clear. Not just that Europe no longer understands what makes America tick; but that many of the Americans closest to the old European values have ceased to understand as well. The United States — in its preoccupations, in its beliefs, in its perception of itself — is not the nation we thought we knew. For good or ill, it is becoming a much more foreign land; and the engines that drive it are now, and surprising, and very, very strange. When you see Ronald Reagan bathed in glowing cheer you see the embodiment o' that strangeness.

. . . Europe baffles America

By Michael White in Washington

REAGANITE conservatives who hold court at every Washington political gathering remotely worthy of the name are this week left short of a ready explanation for what they regard as inexplicable: a classified — but leaked — opinion poll commissioned by the US Information Agency among their key Nato allies which reveals that Europeans trust Mr Gorbachev on arms control more than they trust Mr Reagan.

To be more precise, the British and the West Germans blame Mr Reagan for the "failure" of the Reykjavik summit, the British by 35 to nine per cent, the Germans *by an astonishing 43 to six per cent. Only* the once fiercely anti-American French give Mr Reagan the benefit of the doubt (by 15 to 12 per cent with the "don't knows" in a clear lead), and even this comfort was offset by the fact that 33 per cent of German voters think Mr Gorbachev is more trustworthy.

The American right is used to the idea that Europe is peopled by wimps, fellow-travellers, and the plainly misinformed, against all of whom Mrs Thatcher must labour endlessly. They even accept that their favourite European is herself occasionally misinformed. What left them gasping was the simultaneous discovery that the same Europeans polled are *not naive about* the Soviet system.

Asked to say which superpower leader best "promotes human rights", Mr Reagan won by a landslide. Seventy five per cent of Britons questioned gave the right answer against six per cent who didn't. In France, it *was 67 to five per cent, and in Germany it* was 67 to three per cent.

"We are not, then, dealing with cretins who simply do not know. It isn't enough to dismiss the poll by saying that here we have a marvellous example of the successes of Soviet propaganda," declared the columnist William F. Buckley Jnr.

INSIDE

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Californian way with bad backs

Roy Hattersley's article, "Me and my displaced vertebrae" (October 5) left me with mingled feelings of amusement and sadness. This is because, we who live in California are rewarded by the remedial benefits that modern chiropractics bring to bad-back sufferers.

The Japanese have been treating bad backs for a couple of thousand years by shiatsu massage technics. I have had my back manipulated by chiropractors for over 50 years. I am now 78 years old, work a full schedule, and have no disease problems. I have a good back. It is so simple, yet so complicated for foreigners to understand.

The reason that your medical profession has no name or diagnosis for a bad back is that they do not understand the human spinal column, other than surgery and prescribing drugs. *Doctors are not* taught to "adjust vertebrae" as chiropractors do.

I am appalled that the many thousands of English people who are suffering from back conditions apparently do not have available the option of chiropractic treatment. In particular, I would stress that the atlas vertebrae next to the head can cause heart trouble, emphysema, migraines, and a host of medical problems, when out of line with the back.

The chemical and pharmacists people sell millions of dollars worth of aspirin and headache remedies each month, treating symptoms of back problems, rather than the real cause. These conditions could be easily alleviated by a simple "movement" of the atlas vertebrae. I have practised law for over 57 years in Hollywood and see examples frequently.

Caryl Warner,
Hollywood Blvd,
Los Angeles.

Beans means money

There cannot be another capital city in the whole of Europe where the foyer of a concert hall displays an exhibition of the History of Heinz Baked Beans, as is currently the case in the Queen Elizabeth Hall. Is it to allow free rein to such unashamed philistinism that the GLC was abolished?

Inge Hyde,
London WC1.

Reprocessing and leukaemia

The Dounreay public inquiry finished hearing medical evidence last week, and it will not be long before Alexander Bell, chief planning officer, will deliver his report to the Secretary of State for Scotland.

The decision to build a European reprocessing plant is being pushed through on the back of a local planning inquiry, and the appointment of a civil servant to head the inquiry has persuaded most environmental groups to boycott the proceedings. Nonetheless it will be fascinating to see how Mr Bell deals with the compelling nature of the medical evidence presented to him.

A nationwide survey carried out by Dr Heasman of the Scottish Health Service has identified excess cases of leukaemia or other types of lymphoid malignancy in children living around the nuclear facilities at Dounreay, Rosyth, Hunterston and Chapel Cross.

In children up to 14 years old there were five cases of childhood leukaemia between 1968 and 1984 in the postcode district around Dounreay compared with an expectation of one. At Sellafield, the only other reprocessing facility in the UK, there were six cases of childhood leukaemia recorded in Seascale for the same period compared with an expected number of 0.25.

The probability of the Sellafield cases occurring by chance is one in a million. For Dounreay the equivalent figure is one in a hundred. By combining these two sets of data one can ask: "What is the probability that these two clusters have arisen by chance?"

The answer is one in 10 million; that is a measure of the confidence one can place on the predictions of the nuclear industry, the reassurances of ministers, and the safety of reprocessing plants in the UK.

(Dr) Robin Russell Jones,
(Chairman, Friends of the Earth Pollution Advisory Committee),
Stoke Poges, Bucks.

Canadian literary leanings

As much as I hate to admit it ". . . a good Canadian novel . . ." (November 2) does sound like the beginning of a bad joke. As much as I know this to be untrue, like most Canadians who live abroad, I am aware of the image my country portrays to the world. I think to most people the image of Canada brings forth visions of a vast expanse of frozen wasteland; perhaps a geography and climate similar to the Soviet Union's, and we all know how exciting the Soviet Union can be. Unfortunately, I think most Europeans lump Canadians in the same unintelligible category as Americans. (The Americans just disregard us like they do the rest of the world.) But for a Canadian this is all highly insulting. Like the people of Scotland, Canadians can spend a great deal of time preoccupying themselves with the reasons why they are unlike their Southern neighbours.

But in the end, I doubt many Canadians find it surprising that two of their "country-people" were shortlisted for this year's Booker Prize. Canadians can be extremely proud of their nation's literature and most hold a somewhat superior attitude when discussing it. "If you don't know anything about Canadian literature, then you should!" I heard this remark made to an amazingly unknowledgeable American.



With a populaton of just twenty-five million I think it would be surprising for Europeans to find that Canada is culturally and politically very diverse. The continued co-existence of the British and French peoples help make it this way. I hope that the Booker nomination will introduce Canadian literature to an unfortunately uninformed international reading public, but I doubt it. People forget too quickly and are very used to imposing those Canadian stereotypes we're so weary of. But when Davies and Atwood sneak back to the land of snow and moose I hope someone in Britain will associate Canada with more than lumber.

Jack Keefe,
Glasgow University.

Time to pay ex-PoWs what they are owed

Come Armistice Day, surviving prisoners-of-war shot down over Germany helplessly remember that their government still refuses to reimburse them part of their wartime pay.

To discredit their written invoices of November 8, 1984, the Prime Minister sponsored the *infamy* "that not one single PoW could demonstrate he'd not received all the pay to which he was entitled".

When this lie was exposed as an MoD invention, the Prime Minister ordered the "important government department" responsible (F2 Air Accts Mr. P. C. Lynam) to explain its reasoning *on her behalf.*

Mr Lynam declined to comply: instead, he wrote that as I had received more than 30 letters on the PoW pay subject, no explanation would be forthcoming, on the grounds *"I was merely tweaking the tail of the MoD".*

Was I? I had sought redress against the government's privileged use of lies, falsifications, half-truths and evasions by ministers and bureaucrats to justify their refusal to allow an independent inquiry as recommended by the Ombudsman.

The late Marshal of the RAF, Sir A. T. Harris, Bart, sided with the PoWs and said we would eventually receive what we are owed.

Can you help the Marshal's belief come true? Please?

Michael Roth,
Ex-RAF 3917, PoW 333, 5yrs,
133 Glenrose Ave,
Toronto.

Prince Philip's tit-for-tat

Could the Duke of Edinburgh's remarks be "tit for tat." After all Sun Yat Sen, when asked by a reporter whether he had noticed anything particular about the *Americans, replied: "Yes, the peculiar slant of their eyes."*

Tom Kershaw,
Carmel, Cumbria.

I hope that all British students at present in China will stay long enough to learn from their hosts' behaviour that the best way to deal with tactless speakers and publicity-seeking listeners is by *keeping a dignified silence.*

(Mrs) G. May,
Sturminster Newton,
Dorset.

A US lead to follow

While I naturally welcome the initiatives by General Motors, IBM, Coca Cola, Procter and Gamble, and Shell as a speeding-up of pressure towards non-violent change in South Africa.

I am, equally naturally, con*cerned about the potential dangers* for British industry and jobs.

The TUC has consistently pointed out that when the inevitable basic changes take place in South Africa, the attitude of the people and new government to British investment and exports is likely to be draconian. They will act against those they perceive to have been the enemies of their freedom; and the action of a growing number of US companies further isolates British companies inactive in this field.

It is unfortunately too late for British companies to be seen to have given a lead, but not too late for them to take action.

The fact that the British stake in South Africa is now clearly an investment in insecurity, provides a clear commercial reson for withdrawal if moral arguments have been deemed inadequate.

Norman Willis,
(General Secretary),
TUC, London WC1.

Ministry of indiscretion

It was with interest that I read about the discovery of documents on a path near the river Thames concerning defence matters, in particular, the proposed reduction in the strength of the British Navy.

About two months ago, I overheard this and more about Mrs Thatcher's defence policies, as well as disparaging remarks about military chiefs between two gentlemen, one of whom, I suppose must have been employed by the Ministry of Defence.

Rather indiscreet, one might say, but so what? The conversation took place on a flight between Moscow and London aboard a Soviet airliner!

Are British defence policies such an open secret?

Mr R. Iwaskow,
Sharmu Obata,
Nagoya, Japan.

SDI might work

Many journalists and writers of letters to editors are convinced that SDI is a time-wasting, money-wasting impossibility. For all that I know they may be correct. My question is this: Why don't the Soviets know this? Mr Gorbachev seems sure enough that SDI is a workable scheme that he was willing to nobble the Iceland meeting because Mr Reagan was not willing to drop the idea.

Philip C. Freund,
The Storm King School,
Cornwall-on-Hudson,
New York.

How British Rail runs on Mexican lines

Rather than knock British Rail, I believe it is to be congratulated. Its advertising slogan, "We're getting there," is outdated and should be changed to, "We've arrived".

The service is now much worse and more expensive than that provided by the railways in Mexico. Recently I went on the spectacular 16 hour journey from Chihuahua to Los Mochis, and it took 20 hours. The train was dirty, the toilets filthy, and the food bad. Just what one would expect.

Arriving home, I had to make a trip from Rochester to Hither Green which entailed changing trains at Dartford: The connecting train was cancelled and I had to spend an extra half-hour on Dartford station.

Whilst sitting on the platform, I noticed that the 9.06 from Charing Cross arrived 16 minutes late. Not bad going on a 44 minute journey. The next train from Charing Cross was a mere 12 minutes late. Still, minute for minute, well down to the Mexican standard.

Being disappointed by this better timekeeping, I went in search of a cup of coffee. Not even the worst Mexican variety was available, so I went to the toilet.

No cause for complaint here. The stench from the Portaloo by the ticket barrier was as high as anything to be found in Mexico.

And joy of joys! There was a notice that talked of the pride Network Southeast took in this state of affairs. Of course, I don't expect every station to live down to the standard of Dartford. After all this is where the Area Manager has his office.

Now with British Rail's latest announcement about subsidy and policy, I'm sure we have nothing to fear. We will be able to hold our heads up and proudly proclaim that we have the worst railway service in the world.

Wilfred Grove,
Harold Road,
Cuxton, Kent.

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Teachers embark on strike campaign despite 16pc offer

ONE of the country's biggest teaching unions — that of the schoolmasters and women teachers — embarked on another series of damaging strikes this week just as the Education Secretary, Mr Kenneth Baker, offered teachers a pay rise of more than 16 per cent over the next two years. This, coupled with recent settlements, would add up to 25 per cent in just over two years, which is four times what the Government considers to be the going rate for pay awards in the public sector.

The offer is unlikely to commend itself to the teachers. Not only do they want more money to make good a decade of erosion, but they object to the conditions which Mr Baker attaches to the deal. He wants the teachers to agree to a legally binding, unambiguous set of conditions of service, including availability for work, and a requirement to stand in for absent colleagues — conditions which would prevent a recurrence of the strikes which have seriously hampered education, particularly in secondary schools, during the past three years.

Few people outside the profession understand the complexity of teachers' salaries and, even if they did, would probably not sympathise with the status-consciousness that underlies the structure. Mr Baker probably senses that the teachers have lost much of the goodwill they once enjoyed and is seeking to buy peace, at least until the general election, with an offer that will seem generous to those who have to settle for annual rises of about three per cent.

If education proves to be the vote-winner that the Government so badly needs, much of the fault will lie with left-wing local education authorities who have incurred much ridicule — and sometimes alarm — in recent months with what seems to many parents to be extremist attitudes on such matters as race and sexuality. The next Tory election manifesto will almost certainly include a promise to introduce a revolutionary new Education Act to accord sweeping new powers to head teachers, school governors and parents and, in the process, to take control of teachers' pay away from local councils and the teaching unions.

In the absence of any other immediate vote-winner, Mr Norman Tebbit, turned his sights on the BBC, which he accused of anti-Tory bias. A team in Mr Tebbit's office, which has been beavering away for months to find evidence to support the growing Conservative view that the corporation is manned by dedicated Marxists, Trotkyites and sundry other lefties, settled in the end for a generalised complaint that the BBC's coverage of the American bombing raid on Libya was biased and incompetent. (See page 6.)

The Prime Minister, Mrs Thatcher, believes that if any of her policies proves unpalatable, the fault must surely lie with its presentation or the way it is reported. The BBC, however, enjoys more public respect than she or Mr Tebbit seem to realise, and the present attacks on the corporation — almost certainly the start of a sustained campaign — are more likely to be seen as an attempt to muzzle independent-minded journalism and programme-making in the run-up to an election. A poll showed that 88 per cent of people wanted the BBC to be left alone to decide its news values for itself with only six per cent supporting the Conservative party's complaint and the rest undecided.

Last month's encouraging unemployment figures were dealt a severe blow by the Confederation of British Industry, which predicted that job losses in manufacturing industry would rise from 6,000 to 8,000 a month from now into the new year. This forecast was based on the results of the CBI's normally reliable quarterly survey of industrial trends which, significantly, was completed before the recent increase of one per cent in interest rates, which will itself add £250 million to industry's costs and almost certainly cost more jobs.

The Government, however, persists in its belief that many people drawing unemployment benefit are workshy rather than really jobless. It attracted furious criticism from Labour and Liberal MPs by introducing, from last week, a new "availability for work" test. This will allow benefit officers to withdraw benefit if they suspect that claimants are not immediately available for work, want a job at a higher salary, are looking after *children or disabled relatives,* or refuse to work outside their home town.

While few would object to any measure to weed out real scroungers, the director of the Low Pay Unit, Mr Chris Pond, raised the most relevant objection when he accused the Government of turning the rules of "work availability" into a system of work conscription. "All they are offering to the unemployed is a transfer from the dole queue to the sweat-shop," he said.

Irish politics took another twist when Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, decided to stand for election to the Dublin parliament, the Dail, thus overturning what has been the central tenet of the republican faith for 35 years. The chances are that, in the current climate of opinion, Sinn Fein would capture no more than one or two seats in the Dail, but even this could seriously affect the balance between the two established parties, Fianna Fail and Fine Gael, whose majorities in government in recent years have seldom exceeded *a handful of seats.*

Ever since the Irish Republic was formed, Sinn Fein has refused to join a parliament that it regards as illegitimate because it does not represent the 32 counties of North and South. A body of 30 Sinn Feiners refused to go along with the new strategy and may form a breakaway group. But the majority *accepted the arguments* of the party's president, Mr Gerry Adams, that it was necessary to build a political base in the south and that the old abstentionist policy only increased Sinn Fein's isolation from ordinary people who accepted the Dail as their parliament.

THE WEEK IN BRITAIN by James Lewis

Jarrow voices its despair 50 years on

FRANK FIRTH, who stepped out on the first day of the Jarrow Crusade in 1936, finally marched into the heart of London on Sunday — his starting point and finish 300 miles and 50 years apart.

He could be forgiven for thinking that, while everying had altered, nothing had really changed.

He was there for the last leg of the 1986 March for Jobs, a different enterprise covering much the same ground: bringing to Parliament, by way of 23 towns, Park Lane, Piccadilly, and Pall Mall, a plea for work.

Mr Firth, a 68-year-old grocer and president of Jarrow Labour Party, joined in the last stage, from Hyde Park to Trafalgar Square, of the month-long march which has evoked his home town's name, many memories, and some mixed feelings.

The marchers — 10 of them from Jarrow, the remainder added by pairs at each of the towns and cities on route — were talking of dignity, the dole, and doughnuts. A bystander, in the supposedly uncaring South, had dived into a bakery and bought a bag of buns for the marchers passing by.

Mr Firth was talking of his sense of shame. He had hoped that Jarrow would not have to send marchers on the road again.

"The only time the people of England need the North is when there's a war on — then they need our ships and men," he said.

By Andrew Moncur

At the time of the first crusade, he had been able to take only a day away from his work at the Co-op dairy to accompany the Jarrow men. They paraded to the town hall and then to church, to be blessed, before marching off for Chester-le-Street.

Then it was raincoats, flat hats, and a mouth organ band. The latest long-distance marchers were kitted out in orange waterproof jackets, printed with the list of their concerns: work, welfare, housing, and health. They walked quietly through the West End, at the head of a brass band and a column of supporters estimated by the police at 2,000 strong.

"We don't chant," said Mr Billy Orr, a 38-year-old unemployed shipyard storeman from Jarrow, whose grandfather took part in the 1936 march. "If you give respect, you get respect."

The marchers were welcomed at a rally in Trafalgar Square by Mr Norman Willis, the TUC general secretary. They were praised by Mr Michael Meacher, Labour's spokesman on social services.

Gadafy pledge of support lands Haughey in trouble

THE Irish opposition leader, Mr Charles Haughey, is coming under pressure to dissociate himself from a declaration of friendship and support from the Libyan leader Colonel Gadafy.

Colonel Gadafy's comments in an Irish television interview were seized on by Mr Haughey's political opponents, while government ministers in Dublin expressed outrage at the Libyan leader's support for the IRA.

The Foreign Minister, Mr Peter Barry, accused Colonel Gadafy of "an outrageous intrusion into the affairs of this country" and ordered a diplomatic protest.

Colonel Gadafy urged young people throughout Ireland to take part in the "liberation" of the North. Describing the British presence as colonial, he declared that if he were leader of the republic he would fight to liberate the North.

Colonel Gadafy made an unexpected declaration of support from Mr Haughey, whom he met once on one of the Fianna Fail leader's two trips to Libya: "I consider him a friend and I support him. I think he is going to be beneficial for Ireland. He will strengthen its relations with Libya and the Arab world."

Strategists in the Fine Gael-Labour coalition government immediately set about making full use of Colonel Gadafy's intervention in the republic's undeclared general election campaign.

"Haughey is now planning to take us out of Europe and into the Arab world," said one.

The Industry Minister, Mr Michael Noonan, called on Mr Haughey to clarify his friendship with the colonel. He said he was deeply concerned that any sugges*tion of friendship with Colonel* Gadafy could damage prospects of United States investment in Ireland.

He added that US companies have invested $4 billion in Ireland and created 40,000 jobs in 327 companies. They account for 18 per cent of all manufacturing in Ireland.

Mr Haughey remained silent. His friends pointed out that anyone can express friendship with a politician.

Mr Haughey went out on a limb earlier this year to criticise the American bombing of Libya. It was a courageous comment in the light of his party's fund-raising efforts in the US and the importance accorded by Irish politicians to US opinion.

By Joe Joyce in Dublin

• The Irish republican movement has split with a large majority of delegates at Provisional Sinn Fein's conference in Dublin voting at the behest of its president, Mr Gerry Adams, to take up seats in the Dail — the Irish Parliament — and thus overturning a central tenet of republican faith for 65 years.

The former Provisional leader, Mr Ruairi O'Bradaigh, led a walkout by 30 delegates against the new strategy. He later announced they were setting up a new party, called Republican Sinn Fein.

(Comment, page 10)

Government urged to spend £80m on Aids

By Aileen Ballantyne, James Naughtie and Jean Stead

THE Government was urged this week to release an immediate cash grant of £20 million for research *and treatment of Aids,* backed up by a further £60 million for the following year.

The call came from Mr Charles Kennedy, the SDP health spokesman, in a letter to the Health Minister, Mr Tony Newton, as a Cabinet committee was being formed to co-ordinate the Government's efforts to tackle Aids.

The group includes ministers from the education department, the DHSS and the Home Office. It will be chaired by Viscount Whitelaw.

The committee, which has not yet met, is expected to attempt to devise clearer and more straightforward methods of explaining the dangers of the disease, which has already infected *30,000 people in Britain.*

Mr Newton said in a written answer in the Commons this week that 512 people had developed the Aids disease in the UK up to the end of September last year. Two hundred and fifty of these had died of the disease.

The Cabinet committee was set up after criticism by health experts that an Aids epidemic could sweep the country if the Government does not start talking more explicitly about the disease.

Mr Newton said two cases of babies with Aids have been reported to the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre. He added that two recipients of blood from the National Blood Transfusion Service are known to have developed Aids, *but stressed that they* received blood from the service before screening for Aids antibodies began in October 1985. Since then there had been no cases of blood donors transmitting the disease, he said.

No health care worker was known to have contracted the disease as a result of treating an Aids patient, but one nurse had developed Aids antibodies after an accident with a contaminated needle.

The Social Services Secretary, Mr Norman Fowler, speaking on BBC television, urged people not to panic about Aids and added that the Government would devise ways of getting the message across.

A Commons early day motion carrying 90 signatures, almost all from Conservative MPs, has called on the BBC and the IBA to provide free broadcasting time to inform the public about the dangers of Aids.

Scottish Television has started a week-long television campaign against Aids which followed a news filming in New York and Edinburgh.

The two cities rank together in having the highest proportion of Aids virus carriers among intravenous drug carriers. Eighty-five per cent of such drug users in Edinburgh *are now repoted to be* infected with the Aids virus.

Every man and woman serving in the navy, army, and air force is to be sent a leaflet explaining how to avoid catching Aids.

The Ministry of Defence is distributing more than 300,000 copies of a Health Education Council pamphlet to British forces around the world. A *three-paragraph slip* of paper warning that homosexual acts are illegal in the services is enclosed.

Saudis deport 'drinking' nurses

THE Saudi Arabian government's deportation on Monday of 23 British nurses for drinking alcohol at a birthday party was being viewed with resignation by the Foreign Office as it made the final arrangements for this week's visit to the state by the Prince and Princess of Wales.

A second group of hospital workers is being expelled by the Saudi authorities. They were also detained in the police raid on the late night birthday party at a Riyadh villa in September.

The Foreign Office said that further expulsions could not be ruled out. About 100 people were arrested and questioned after the raid.

Britain imposes 150-mile Falklands fishing limit

By Hella Pick

BRITAIN is to establish a 150 mile fisheries protection zone around the Falkland Islands from next February in a move to reassert its sovereignty over the disputed territory.

It will be known as the Falkland Islands Interim Conservation and Management Zone (FICZ) and corresponds approximately to the current Falkland Islands Protection Zone.

Britain's decision is designed as a conservation measure, but it is also intended as a fresh political rebuff to Argentina's claims over what it calls the Malvinas.

The Falkland Islands authorities will use their own civilian fisheries protection vessels and a surveillance aircraft to enforce the new regime. British forces on the island will also be available to police the new fisheries conservation zone.

In a parallel move, the Government has also formally asserted its right, under international law, to a fisheries limit of 200 miles around the Falklands, except where it overlaps with the Argentinian zone.

Although there is little hope of an oil bonanza in Falklands waters, Britain has decided to confirm its rights to jurisdiction over the continental shelf up to the limits prescribed by international law.

The decision, announced by the Foreign Secretary in the Commons, brought an immediate and angry response from Mr Denis Healey, the shadow foreign secretary, who said it would sink the Government "still deeper in the quagmire of the Falklands commitment."

Labour's Mr George Foulkes added that a high seas clash with the Soviet Union is now a "real possibility," because of a Soviet agreement with Argentina which allows it to fish within the 200-mile limit around the Falklands.

That agreement is one of the factors that triggered off Britain's move to establish its own rights over the zone. Foreign Office officials expressed optimism that Moscow would accept the new situation and avoid provocative moves in the South Atlantic.

Sir Geoffrey said there was nothing irrevocable about the decision, and that Britain would remain open to multilateral arrangements to conserve Falklands fish stocks. "What we are doing is asserting, as is necessary for the maintenance of our sovereignty and for the preservation of our fish stocks in the South Atlantic, the jurisdiction to which we are entitled," he said.

The Falkland Islands representative in London, Mr Alastair Cameron, welcomed the Government's move, saying: "It will give us control over one of our major resources."

The Falkland Islands authorities will now be able to sell fishing licences for the zone. Britain has told the Soviet and East European fishing fleets in the South Atlantic, as well as Japan and the numerous other countries harvesting the rich reserves in the area, that they must apply for the licences.

Argentina accused Britain of trying to add "new areas and resources to its colonies," and said Britain had ignored international agreements "to eliminate colonialism."

In a long statement released after hours of discussion at President Raul Alfonsin's official residence, the Government said it would not accept the "arbitrary pretension of the United Kingdom to exercise rights that belong to Argentina's national patrimony."

The statement said Britain was "attributing to itself the exercise of rights in a more extensive area that overlaps and interferes with peacefully acknowledged Argentine rights and jurisdiction."

The Argentine Government said Britain was trying to use Argentina's insistence in recent years on the need to protect natural resources as an excuse "to appropriate not only the waters and resources but also the sub-sea" in the South Atlantic.

Sir Geoffrey, in his statement in the House of Commons, indicated that the decision to impose unilaterally a fishing zone had been taken reluctantly and as a last resort. He blamed Argentina for "indifference to the Falklands conservation needs, and a preference for obstruction rather then co-operation."

There is a strongly-held belief in Whitehall that Argentina, more than any other country, has deliberately slowed down multilateral negotiations on a fisheries conservation regime for the Falklands, which are being conducted under the aegis of the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation.

While Britain is not abandoning the negotiations, the Government has concluded that there is now no hope of achieving a settlement in time for the next fishing season, which opens on February 1.

Jeremy Morgan adds: There are fears in Buenos Aires of an outburst of nationalist sentiment reminiscent of the Falklands war in 1982. There are suspicions that the United States somehow had a hand in the British move and the Foreign Minister, Mr Dante Caputo, had at least one secret meeting with Mr Elliot Abrams, the US Undersecretary for Inter-American Affairs. He has also reportedly spoken on the telephone to the US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz. Mr Shultz apparently said that he was surprised by Britain's move to extend its territorial waters around the Falklands.

The Government has meanwhile decided to form a military committee and to stop sending conscripts home early. The measures are seen as a sign that President Alfonsin does not feel strong enough to confront an officer corps which largely considers itself a law until itself.

Big money, courtesy of UK protection

By John Ezard

IF you are prosperous enough to go into the leading London seafood restaurant Manzi's and pay £4.50 for a few morsels of squid as a starter, the odds are that your dish was caught near the Falklands. But it reaches the British gourmet trade only at the end of a long, costly chain of international barter.

It would have been scooped out of the water by a Soviet, Taiwanese, Bulgarian, Japanese or South Korean trawler, swapped around the world fish futures market and finally supplied — in exchange for a disproportionately high weight of Scots mackerel — to a British wholesale importer who cannot buy British because Britain no longer has a deep-sea trawler fleet. The British importer's likeliest source would have been Soviet. That is also one of the reasons choice Scots mackerel is hard to come by and expensive in Britain.

This unforeseen legacy of the 1982 conflict infuriated not only conservationists but those sections of the fish trade which encountered it day by day. They knew that the hundreds of multinational factory ships and squid jigging vessels which swarmed into the South Atlantic every January at the start of the fishing season could only operate within the security and rescue fallback provided — in the world's only unrestricted rich fishing waters — by Britain's 150-mile naval, RAF and military Falkland Islands Protection Zone (FIPZ) established after the conflict.

The garrison's inshore Sea King helicopter patrols, costly in maintenance and flying hours, found themselves both reconnoitring the fleets and flying Polish seamen with peritonitis into Port Stanley for surgery. No costing for this involuntary extra role has ever been done because it would be too embarrassing.

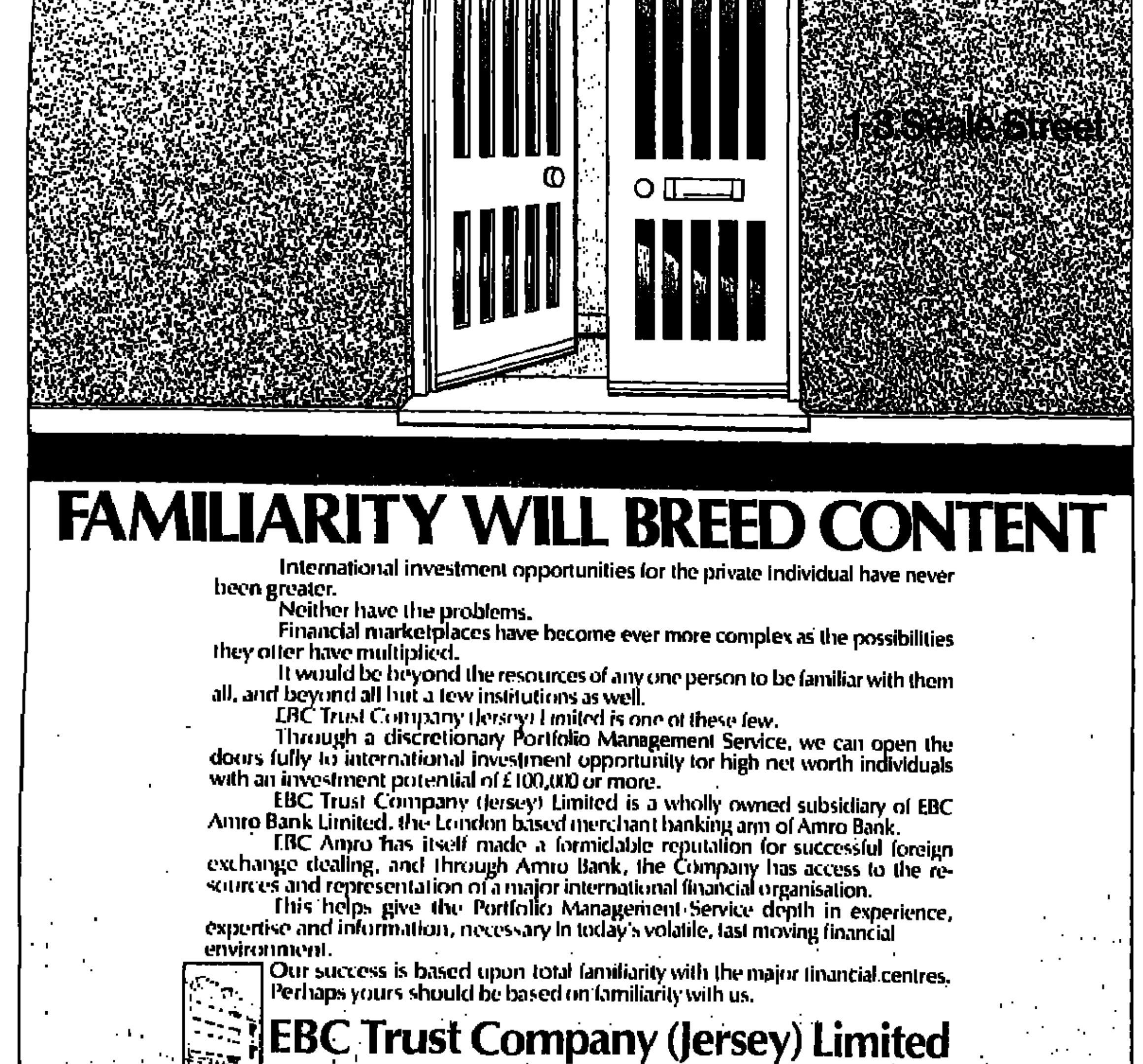
But the big money made by the fleets can be estimated more authoritatively by their market. Last season they took their largest catch, 381,000 tonnes of squid, blue whiting, and other fish saleable at a minimum value of £210 million from around the islands.

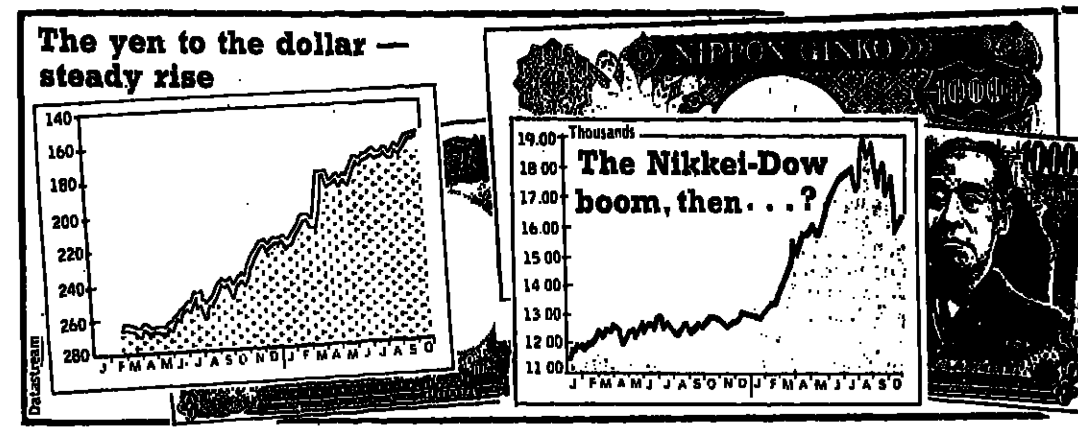
That figure — some other estimates put it much higher — is only just under half the total 1986/1987 cost to the British taxpayer of maintaining the Falklands garrison. The scale of the operation on the ground is remarkable. Berkeley Sound, the vast deepwater harbour where some of the jiggers transfer catches to freezer vessels, was like a city in illumination when I saw it at night last year.

Yet factors more crucial than money have begun to press. Penguins, albatrosses and other birds, as well as gourmets, eat squid; and the birds depend on it. At the end of last year's breeding season, with 650 ships active, hundreds of emaciated, underdeveloped young penguins were washed all over the islands. This year's season will be more closely and anxiously monitored than ever before. If results show that the food chain of the South Atlantic's miraculous wildlife has been injured, the Government — and the Opposition parties whose specialists have taken not the slightest active interest in the issue — will have a heavy international case to answer regardless of last week's declaration of another acronym, FICZ, the Falkland Islands Interim Conservation and Management Zone.

Instead came Argentina's signing this summer of a fishing agreement with Russia and Bulgaria, in waters which include British claimed territory, coupled with a new Russian-built port facility at Bahia Blanca. Sir Geoffrey cited this as a principal cause for his decision, which was in fact governed as much by the failure of foredoomed and procrastinatory efforts to get a multilateral fishing deal through the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation.

The zone will enable British trawlers to fish profitably against more subsidised foreign fleets. Revenue from licences paid by those fleets should raise the pace of development for human beings on the Falklands. But if you know these islands, you know that life for their humans will be incommensurately poorer if the wildlife which until now has always surrounded them has already been marred.





Still good reasons for being in Japan

By Hamish McRae

A FEW months ago the most fashionable country in which to invest was Japan. Just about every unit trust was bringing out its Japan fund — some bringing out several.

British investors were individually investing in Japan too, with several stockbrokers now running Tokyo offices which pumped out information about the major Japanese companies.

Needless to say, they would not have devoted those resources to research without finding a ready market.

Now all has changed. Since the beginning of last year the yen has risen steadily against the US dollar. As the graph shows, the fall of the dollar has tailed off somewhat since the summer, with the dollar trading in the Yen 150-155 range. But at that level much of Japanese industry is unprofitable.

To take just one example, last month Japan's largest electronic company, Hitachi, reported that its profits in the six months to end of September had fallen by nearly 50 per cent.

Now Hitachi had been hit by falling prices of semiconducters and video recorders as well as the rising yen, but the experience will have been repeated right across the broad span of Japanese export industry.

It was the realisation of the damage that the strong yen was doing to the exporters which has helped end the boom of the Tokyo Stock Exchange.

The second graph shows what has happened to the stock market. What must at first sight seem surprising is the way in which the Japanese share boom continued right through the first 18 months after the turn of the dollar. It was only this summer that investors started to become wary.

Indeed, in the first part of this year, after the initial fall of the dollar, the market took off in a quite spectacular way. It was only after August that the current bout of jitters took hold. Is it time to take the profit and run? Or do the local investors who piled in the other week know something that the rest of us don't?

As in all investment advice you have to hedge all conclusions with large public health warnings, but there are some points to make.

The first is that the combination of a strong currency and a strong stock market have created quite an extraordinary boom for sterling-based holders of yen securities this year.

Indeed, in sterling terms the Nikkei Dow index doubled between October last year and August this. Even now, it is still standing at about 85 per cent above the level of a year ago. That sort of rise does not often occur in the world of investment finance.

The second is that the yen itself, despite the massive revaluation, is still buttressed by the enormous trade surplus which Japan is still generating, perhaps of the order of $60 billion this year. Exporting may be rather unprofitable for the Japanese at these exchange rates, but they are still doing so as fast as ever.

Further, even when the Japanese trade surplus declines, as eventually it surely must, the current account will be bolstered by the fact that it has become the world's largest net owner of assets abroad.

But if you can assume that for the foreseeable future the yen is extremely secure, can you say the same for the prices on the Tokyo Stock Exchange?

The short answer must be no.

You can discuss Japanese stock market prospects at two levels. You can talk about fundamental values. On the one hand, the country continues to generate vast savings, much of which are plunged into securities. The result has been that price/earnings ratios are extremely high by world standards; and dividend income is extremely low. Japanese stocks, measured by these conventional measures, are very expensive.

But that line of argument would have discouraged people from investing in Japan at the beginning of this year, so the public health warning on that argument has to be much on display

There is nothing wrong with shares that are "bad value" provided no-one else minds. Japanese investors evidently do not.

The second approach is to look at industrial prospects. Here, despite the obvious squeeze on profits of the main exporting companies, you can point to a couple of signs of comfort.

One is that not all Japanese industry is in the exporting sectors. Per head of population and taking invisibles into account, the Japanese export less than we do.

So a large portion of the index represents retailers, financial service companies, domestically-oriented industry and so on. Some sections of domestic industry — construction, for example — will in fact benefit from the redirection of the Japanese economy away from exporting which now has to take place.

Japanese stocks remain very expensive, and people who have made good profits might well like to take some of them. But there are some sound reasons to remain in Japan, of which perhaps, the fundamental strength of the yen is the best.

Heartcry of a generation

Dennis Barker on the novelist John Braine, who died last week

JOHN BRAINE, the seminal novelist of the angry 1950s who never quite regained the early assurance of his first novel, Room At The Top, was a self-made Yorkshireman whose sudden wealth took him to the stockbroker belt of Weybridge, and whose later comparative poverty took him to a rented flat in Hampstead where he tired even of the right-wing causes that had irritated the literary establishment for a generation.

John Gerard Braine, son of a sewerage worker, was born on April 13, 1922 and left school at 16. In rapid order he was a furniture shop assistant, a laboratory worker, a piston factory hand and a wartime naval telegraphist.

After the war he took a room in London to write, became ill and spent 18 months in hospital where he began to write Room At The Top. He was back in Yorkshire working as a branch librarian in the West Riding County Library when the novel was published in 1957. It was a saga of a crudely and naively ambitious young man from the North who sets his cap at a rich industrialist's daughter and ends up an executive in an unloving marriage.

The book was rejected by four publishers before it was taken by Eyre and Spottiswoode. It was a heartcry from a whole trans-class generation and enjoyed an immediate success. In two months it made the £13 a week librarian into a £1,000 a week novelist. Braine appeared at the year's Cheltenham Festival with such celebrities as Sir Anthony Blunt.

But Braine's next novel The Vodi, a strangely surrealist work, epitomised the problems that Braine was to face when he departed from his simple formula of socially-rising man. It baffled the critics and the public and set him on an erratic literary course that seemed to stabilise again only with Life At The Top which, like the earlier novel, was made into a successful film.

John Braine was strong on narrative line, weak on humour, warmth, and that self-awareness a writer needs if he is to draw other, totally different, characters truly. "All artists are repellent, but most repellent are writers," he once said. "Their material is ordinary human life, they capitalise on emotional experience. It might be technically possible for a painter to be a decent human being but never a writer." It was a facile maxim which could be taken as an indication of his exaggerated fears about himself.

A COUNTRY DIARY

OXFORDSHIRE: In my area, on the edge of the Cotswolds, dry-stone walls of the local limestone were once the commonest form of field boundaries on the higher ground. But even these sturdy structures needed repair from time to time, when extremes of cold or drought, causing expansion or contraction of the soil beneath, resulted in the collapse of sections. In the old days craftsmen, often the farm-workers themselves, would carry out the repairs, but with the advent of barbed wire it became more usual for the gaps to be closed with a few posts and a couple of strands of wire. Electrified fencing followed as the next form of stop-gap, and the remnants of the walls were allowed to tumble down. In many cases, thanks to wind-borne and bird-borne seeds, the tumbledown ruins were hidden by adventitious shrubs and trees. Just near my house is a field boundary which I knew as a dry-stone wall about 60 years go. It is now a dense hedge of hawthorn, crab, blackthorn, sycamore, maple and elder, with attendant scramblers such as both bryonies, old man's beard, brambles and briars. But now some of the still intact and well-built old walls are going the way of hedges. They are being demolished, and since some of them are roadside boundaries, their removal in no way enlarges the field for mechanical tillage. One can only assume that there is a market for the old weathered stone, and that the replacement by a single strand of electric fence is financially worthwhile. Near my house a new property has had a drystone wall erected, and for some time I was puzzled by the fact that somehow it did not look in keeping with other old ones nearby. It then dawned on me that, although well-built, there was a certain higgledy-piggledy final effect because the stones, of varying sizes, had been inserted in random fashion, whereas in the traditional style there were definite horizontal courses of stones of approximately the same thickness. But they are still better to look at than strands of wire.

W. D. Campbell.

Tebbit's attack on the BBC backfires

THERE ARE signs that the Conservative Party may be beginning to have second thoughts over its assault on the BBC, launched by the party chairman, Mr Norman Tebbit, last week with a barrage of detailed criticism over the BBC's coverage of the American bombing of Libya.

Mr Tebbit's attack rebounded badly against him at a meeting of the Tory MPs' backbench home affairs committee at the Commons on Monday.

Strong criticism of his memorandum to the corporation last week was expressed by rightwingers normally sympathetic to his point of view and others who argued that it was an interference with the independence of the public broadcasting service.

Some rightwingers argued that Mr Tebbit had gone "over the top" and thus jeopardised what they regarded as a strong Tory case against the BBC.

The outcome was the Mr Tebbit failed to get the support of a backbench committee which would normally be expected to be in his camp. Only about a dozen MPs attended, but it is understood that even such resolute rightwingers as Mr Ivor Stanbrook, MP for Orpington, were fiercely critical.

Cabinet colleagues are embarrassed by Mr Tebbit's assault. A number of them believe it to be an act of surprising political ill-judgment.

The BBC is preparing a point-by-point rebuttal of Mr Tebbit's charges, and its managing director, Mr Bill Cotton, is to meet Mr Tebbit to discuss them. The BBC intends to prove that it had factual support for its approach to the American bombing and its reporting of world reaction to the event.

One mistake is likely to be frankly acknowledged — a news report which suggested wrongly that the attempt to put a bomb on an El Al plane at Heathrow Airport was a reprisal for the American bombing. The BBC corrected the broadcast statement later the same evening, but the Conservative Central Office report says that by then the damage was already done.

Mr Tebbit set up a monitoring unit in Central Office earlier this year, and the party newspaper, Conservative Newsline, has been urging Tory activists to send in complaints about the BBC.

His memorandum concerns two news broadcasts, on April 15 and 17 on the US raid, in which he accuses reporters of having given too much sympathy to Libyan bombing victims and BBC editors for writing bulletins slanted against Mrs Thatcher.

The complaint contrasted, line by line, the BBC and ITN headlines, claiming that the BBC emphasised anti–Americanism. A headline stating: "In Washington the mood is one of jubilation" was, he said, "a particularly damaging phrase because it was sandwiched between references to children as casualties in the bombing.

The complaint portrayed the raid as leading to two opposing views; one supporting President Reagan and Mrs Thatcher and the other supporting Colonel Gadafy. He accused the BBC directly of reporting the raid in such a way that the pro-Gadafy view was emphasised.

Nowhere in Central Office's otherwise exhaustive 21-page critique of the BBC's reports of the raids on Libya is there mention of the reporter who was actually there putting the bulk of them together.

Ms Kate Adie's name was deliberatley excluded from Mr Norman Tebbit's attack.

Those close to the original meeting at Downing Street, where the exercise was launched, say that it was Mrs Thatcher herself who realised that to attack a journalist widely regarded as one of the BBC's most professional reporters would be counter-productive.

At that meeting, two days after the US raids took place, Mrs Thatcher is understood to have told Mr Tebbit and the Central Office officials with him that Kate Adie's name could not be used, even if it meant leaving the final report with a strange omission.

Ms Adie, one of the BBC's most experienced reporters, has a formidable reputation at Television Centre. Being leftwing is not part of it.

"She's independent, very hard, very prickly, not much liked, but much respected," according to one colleague. "But politics? I don't think she has any."

Those who think she does put her on the right of the political spectrum. They point out that, unlike most other BBC journalists, she is not a member of the National Union of Journalists. "She makes Mrs Thatcher look like a reformed liberal," one senior BBC executive said.

Mr Tebbit's attack has infuriated BBC journalists. A meeting of BBC News journalists voted unanimously to reject the allegations.

When fear and loathing haunt Central Office

NEITHER common sense nor decorum are the virtues which spring immediately to mind when contemplating the career of Mr Jeffrey Archer. He has made an ass of himself more than once, and he has made a great deal of money purveying what we might call Platform Three Victorian values in his best selling novels.

But there is one major saving grace about Mr Archer which may now be out-weighing the other aspects of his character on the minds of Conservative MPs and officials. Had he been in charge at Central Office, it is almost certain that he would not have committed the same mistake as Mr Tebbit in tangling with the BBC.

All the evidence suggests that Mr Archer, while still joint deputy chairman under Mr Tebbit, shared the view of many other senior Conservatives that their party had good reason to be thankful for the kind of media coverage they normally got. Balancing the BBC against the newspapers, he believed the Tories were pretty well off.

When confronted by angry grass roots Conservatives railing about the alleged sins of Auntie Beeb, it was his habit to urge them to buy all the daily newspapers for a day or two, and then to look at them each morning throught the eyes of Mr Kinnock. The result, in his view, would make any fair person sympathise with Mr Kinnock rather than Mrs Thatcher.

Even so, senior Conservatives who spend time in the Tory grass roots (and Mr Archer had an unrivalled record, having visited more local associations than any other top Tory) readily acknowledged that anti-BBC paranoia is at least as rife in the sticks as it is in Mr Tebbit's head.

It is this which accounts for the fact that senior Tory MPs and officials who knew better did not raise their voices against Mr Tebbit's plan to launch a full-scale campaign against the BBC. They justified their silence on the grounds that something had to be done to cool the anger of the party's rank and file.

None of this implies that top Tories are entirely satisfied with the BBC's treatment of the Government in general and the Prime Minister in particular. On the contrary, most of them wince at the references to Mrs Thatcher, particularly in those so-called "comedy" shows, just as Labour supporters used to fume about the references to Harold Wilson 15 years ago.

But the essence of the complaint now being launched against Mr Tebbit by essentially professional Conservatives is that he has allowed paranoia to obliterate common sense. By launching a frontal assault on the Corporation they believe he has mobilised not just public opinion but also the opinion formers against the Conservative Party.

Indeed, in a curious spinoff from the timing of the onslaught the publication of Mr Tebbit's "analysis" of the BBC's Libyan coverage has succeeded in submerging a genuinely damaging event for the BBC. The humiliating climbdown by the BBC governors over the Panorama libel action now looks to be part and parcel of a wholesale Tory drive to intimidate the electronic media in advance of the next election.

That episode should have been a fiasco for the BBC in every particular. The Corporation appears to have drifted into an unnecessary courtroom confrontation over some fairly irrelevant allegations against two right wing Tory MPs, even though it had been advised professionally that it had, at best, only a 40 per cent chance of winning.

But if that was a practical (though costly) error, it is arguable that the whole thrust of the original Panorama programme was also a mistake. Its title made it clear that it was trying to suggest that there was a genuine parallel between the role of Militant Tendency in the Labour Party and that of right wing infiltrators in the Tory Party.

Now, no one can deny that there are right wing loonies in the Conservative Party; there always have been. But to suggest, even by implication, that present day links with semi-fascist organisations or the antics of a few crackpot "radical right" students bears any serious resemblance to the organised and highly successful Militant Tendency is plain daft.

COMMENTARY by Ian Aitken

Such foolishness deserves condemnation, and it got it. It may even deserve legal sanction, though I doubt if it deserves half a million pounds worth of that overpriced commodity. What it does not justify is an all-out bid by the party of government to smear the BBC as a giant nest of Trots, Commies and assorted lefties seeking to bring down not only Mrs Thatcher but also President Reagan.

(You regard that as an overstatement of the position? I asure you it is not. That is precisely the kind of intemperate language which Mr Tebbit employs, particularly when talking to BBC men).

But the major count against Mr Tebbit is not that his case against the BBC is false, unjust, or merely exaggerated. It is that it represents, and will be seen to represent, a peculiarly naked attempt to put the frighteners on a respected and even admired national institution.

Now, you may say that it is scarcely a matter of surprise that a party which brought us the Westland conspiracy and which cheerfully seeks to intimidate the established church and even the Royal Family, should be prepared to go for the BBC too.

But there is a difference, and it is the one which has now caught the attention of Mr Tebbit's many critics inside the Conservative Party. It was first enunciated by Sir William Rees-Mogg in a typically effective but low-key analysis of the consequences of the Tebbit attack.

Sir William, a former deputy chairman of the BBC and the onetime "Mister Clean" of the pre-Murdoch Times, pointed out mildly that at the very minimum the onslaught would be counter productive. For it was now inconceivable that any self-respecting BBC head could be seen to respond to so blatant an attempt by a government minister to influence the behaviour of an independent institution.

So if Mr Tebbit cannot seriously expect to swing the BBC behind the line laid down by the government's image makers, what practical result can he be hoping for? The only rational explanation for his behaviour (and it may be a mistake to seek rational explanations) is that he hopes to make the British public believe the improbable proposition that the BBC is deliberately persecuting the Conservative government.

If so, I offer Mr Tebbit an instructive story which may be new to him — though I fear it may be familiar to some ageing Guardian readers. It concerns the young Reginald Maudling, then a Central Office researcher, who had been sent to help the great Winston Churchill write his speech for a Tory conference.

Sir Winston read him out a passage of manuscript containing a scurrilous attack on the late Hugh Gaitskell. Greatly daring, young Reggie said he thought the leader should not use it. "Pray why not?" asked Winston.

Reggie replied that he did not think it entirely fair, to which Churchill replied sternly: "Young man, in the course of a long career I have never been deterred from saying anything by the conshideration that it was not fair."

"But sir," piped young Maudling, "I don't think the voters will think it fair." "Ah," said Sir Winston, "that is a very different conshideration," and he screwed up the paper and threw it on the floor.

In other words: "Chuck it, Tebbit."

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling Rates November 3	Previous Closing Rates
Australia	2.2035-2.2065	2.1850-2 1950
Austria	20.51-20.54	20.41-20.44
Belgium	60.51-60.62	60.27-60.39
Canada	1.9620-1.9650	1.9525-1.9550
Denmark	10.96-10 98	10 92-10.93
France	9.51-9.52	9.44-9.46
Germany	2.91-2.91	2 89-2.90
Hong Kong	11.01-11.02	10.96-10.97
Ireland	1.0672-1.0682	1.0638-1.0648
Italy	2,009-2,013	1,999-2,003
Japan	231.10-231.50	229.70-230.30
Netherlands	3.291-3.296	3.27-3.28
Norway	10.62-10.63	10.56-10.58
Portugal	213.40-214.25	211.50-212.40
Spain	195.17-195.45	194.60-194.90
Sweden	9.92-9.93	9.88-9.89
Switzerland	2.42302.4270	2.40-2.41
USA	1.4105-1.4115	1.4050-1.4060
ECU	1.3984-1.3992	1.3914-1.3932

FT-30 Share Index 1294.8 . Gold $405.75

THE WEEK

THE Central Committee of Mozambique's ruling Frelimo Party elected the country's Foreign Minister, Mr Joaquim Chissano, to succeed President Samora Machel who died in the as-yet unexplained air crash in South Africa two weeks earlier.

During the war for independence from Portugal Mr Chissano headed Frelimo's Security Department. He was appointed Foreign Minister in 1975.

Mr Chissano immediately faces a fresh crisis in relations with South Africa. South Africa said that a landmine had exploded in the Eastern Transvaal, killing a white lance corporal. African National Congress guerrillas were blamed, and the army said they had infiltrated from Mozambique.

South African Defence Minister, General Magnus Malan, repeated the denial of South African involvement in the plane crash just inside the South African border. He also denied reports that the President was alive after the crash and had been refused treatment. In fact, he said, the president was so badly mutilated by the crash that he could only be identified by dental records.

President Kaunda of Zambia claimed: "There is sufficient circumstantial evidence for us to hold South Africa directly responsible," adding: "The plane was being monitored by South African radar, and we know that electronically it is possible to tamper with machines like aeroplanes."

South Africa said post-mortems on the Soviet aircraft's crew showed they had been drinking. They said the plane was not equipped with modern navigation aids including a ground-proximity warning system.

Some 3,000 workers of all races brought production to a halt at assembly plants belonging to General Motors (South Africa) last week in an attempt to compel the company to grant workers representation on the board. The strike followed GM's decision to withdraw from the country and to sell its South African subsidiary to a group of local businessmen.

AN IRANIAN C-130 transport plane crashed into mountains in south-western Iran, killing 103 soldiers and crew. Iran's Islamic Republic News Agency reported. The crash was caused by "technical failure."

Iran has threatened to launch what it describes as a "decisive" offensive to end the six-year-old war with Iraq by next March, the end of the Persian year.

A FORMER contender for leadership of Poland's Communist Party, General Mieczyslaw Moczar, died at the weekend, aged 73. A second world war partisan leader and life-long Communist, he had been in retirement since 1983.

REVOLUTIONARY "Red Prince" Souphanouvong, who fought his half-brother Souvanna Phouma for the control of Laos for more than two decades, has stepped down as President for health reasons, the state-run radio announced. In keeping with the typical secretiveness of the ruling Communist Party, the station gave no details of the health of the 77-year-old prince, the government's last link with the 700-year-old monarchy it abolished in 1975.

A SENIOR commander of the Basque regional police was killed at the weekend as he led an elite unit in a shoot-out against three ETA members holding a kidnap victim in a mountain cave. The hostage was freed.

VIOLENCE between rival ethnic groups paralysed Pakistan's biggest city, Karachi, where police had been forced to impose a curfew over the weekend. Another 12 people were killed, taking the death toll in the cities of Karachi and Hyderabad to 24 since the trouble started.

A HAND grenade which exploded in the rear toilet of a Thai A-300 airbus caused the plane to plummet 25,000 feet over Japan. Security experts believe that the grenade, possibly of American manufacture, was taken on board in Manila by yakusa (Japanese gangsters) smuggling arms into Japan.

A total of 62 passengers were injured in the incident, including the man suspected of possessing the grenade.

THE VATICAN has repeated its condemnation of homosexuality as "morally irregular," and has attacked bishops and clergy who support homosexuals in defiance of "20 long centuries" of the church's teaching on the subject.



Rising hopes of an arms pact

By Hella Pick

THE United States and the Soviet Union have extended their arms control talks in Geneva, in the hope that they will be able to make swift progress after the Soviet Foreign Minister, Mr Eduard Shevardnadze, and the US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, meet in Vienna this week.

The Geneva talks had been due to adjourn on Tuesday for a lengthy winter break. But in the aftermath of Reykjavik, the negotiating teams have been hampered by disagreements between Washington and Moscow about what was agreed in Iceland, and by unsettled debates in both capitals about the next arms control moves.

Now it is hoped that Mr Shevardnadze and Mr Shultz, both attending this week's Helsinki Review Conference in Vienna, will sort out these difficulties and issue clear and compatible guidelines for the two arms talks teams.

Both sides have indicated they are now ready to stay longer in Geneva, and return after only a short Christmas adjournment — provided they receive the right signals from their foreign ministers.

The Americans contend that two decisions are essential to unlock the negotiations. First, there must be Soviet agreement to negotiate on medium-range nuclear missiles, irrespective of whether such a treaty will ultimately only be signed and implemented as part of the wider package which the Russians want.

The Russians have said that INF must remain linked to a solution of the space weapons issue and to an agreement of strategic arms.

Since the Iceland summit, the Russians have made a series of zig-zag statements about their willingness to negotiate separately on INF. The US is hoping that Mr Shevardnadze will clear up this ambiguity.

Secondly, the US is looking to Mr Shevardnadze to give substance to Soviet hints of greater flexibility in Moscow's position on the permissible limits of space weapons research. The US is said to be ready to negotiate an agreed definition of research to be permitted under the ABM Treaty.

The US has taken steps to allay the fears of its Nato allies that an eventual US-Soviet agreement on the elimination of medium-range nuclear weapons in Europe would jeopardise their vital security interests.

They have told the Soviet Union that the United States, which now has no modern short-range nuclear systems in Europe, must be allowed to match the 200 SS-21s and SS-23s, which the Soviet Union now has in place in Eastern Europe or on its own soil.

Meanwhile, another of the senior US advisers on arms control policy, General Edward Rowney, has just ended a round of East European capitals, seeking to outline the US version of events in Reykjavik, which differs materially in key aspects from the Soviet version.

The Americans, have tabled two draft treaties in Geneva as well as formalising their commitments to abide by the ABM treaty for 10 years.

The American draft treaty on strategic arms reductions is designed to achieve the elimination of all ballistic missiles by the end of 10 years, divided into two five-year stages. The American version would leave both super-powers with nuclear-tipped bombers and with cruise missiles.

The Soviet leader has publicly disputed this version, insisting that President Reagan went much further in Reykjavik and agreed to the elimination of all nuclear arsenals within the 10 year period.

US officials have conceded that Mr Reagan may indeed have said something on these lines, but, if he did so, it was inadvertent. At any rate, both his own advisers and also the Nato allies have convinced the President that, all along, he only had in mind the elimination of ballistic missiles. That is now the official US position.

Alex Brummer adds: President Reagan suggested last week that the Soviet Union could not be trusted on arms control after staging "phony pullouts" from Afghanistan in October. Mr Reagan told a rally that his Star Wars defence system was "critical because the same people who announced phony pullouts last month are saying 'trust us' on arms control this month".

"They cannot talk peace in Reykjavik and wage war in Kabul," he asserted.

The President later argued that the US was now "dealing with the Soviet Union from a position of strength", adding that it was SDI which brought Moscow to the bargaining table. "Our goal is to keep America strong, to save the West from nuclear terror, to make ballistic missiles obsolete and, ultimately, to eliminate them from the face of the earth."

Gorbachev to visit Mexico

MR Mikhail Gorbachev has pulled off another public relations coup at the expense of the Reagan Administration, writes Michael White. Instead of making his promised visit to Washington this year, the Soviet leader is going to tour key Latin American states next spring, notably Mexico whose relations with the US are at a low ebb.

It will be the first visit by a Russian Communist leader to the country which established diplomatic ties with the Bolsheviks as early as 1924 and gave sanctuary to the exiled Trotsky until Stalin's assassins tracked him down in 1940.

Kohl's comparison angers Moscow

By Anna Tomforde in Bonn

RELATIONS between the Soviet Union and West Germany further deteriorated over the weekend, with Moscow cancelling a visit by two German officials.

The Russians first cancelled the proposed visit by the Research and Technology Minister in an apparent protest at Chancellor Helmut Kohl's refusal to apologise for a comparison he made between Mikhail Gorbachev and the Nazi propaganda minister, Josef Goebbels.

The Soviet Union later cancelled a second official West German visit — the planned tour by the head of the cultural department of the Foreign Ministry, Mr Barthold Witte.

Although the Government would officially not link the cancellation of the visit to Moscow by Mr Heinz Riesenhuber to the Chancellor's unfortunate remark, informed sources said the Russians were insisting on a "public clarification".

Dr Kohl, speaking on East-West relations, said in an interview with Newsweek magazine: "I'm not a fool. I don't consider him (Gorbachev) to be a liberal. He is a modern Communist leader who understands public relations. Goebbels, one of those responsible for the crimes of the Hitler era, was an expert in public relations, too."

One day after the interview was published on October 24, the Russian ambassador to Bonn, Mr Yuli Kvitsinski, asked the Government to explain the Chancellor's remark. He was told that what Dr Kohl meant to express was that the effectiveness of a public relations campaign did not necessarily say anything about the quality of the actual policies.

French raiders sink the wrong ship

By Paul Webster in Paris

THE French secret service and the French navy, which blundered in sinking the Greenpeace flagship, the Rainbow Warrior, have apparently teamed up again, this time sinking the wrong ship.

Three weeks after sending the Australian-skippered trawler, Southern Raider, to the bottom of the Indian Ocean, the navy has been accused of getting its targets mixed up.

Unluckily for the captain of the French warship, the Albatross, the French secret service, the DGSE, had signalled the presence of an old enemy, with a similar name, suspected of spying on French and Indian Ocean operations and of gun-running.

Soon after the bombardment and rescue of the trawler's 23-strong crew, the ship being sought was signalled tied up in the Cape.

Since October 9, when the sinking was officially announced, the navy has allegedly tried to cover up the mistake. However, news was broken by the Australian captain, Mr John Chadderton, who has told the Australian press that a deal was offered by the navy and the secret service if he admitted that he was working a spy ship.

The captain, three other Australians, and four New Zealand crewmen are now being held on illegal fishing charges in the French Overseas Department of Reunion.

In Paris, sources in the Defence Ministry admitted that there was an inquiry being made on possible confusion over the name of the ship, while insisting that the Albatross had the right to attack as the Southern Raider was illegally fishing for lobster in French territorial waters.

The official version of events given after the sinking on October 9 reported a 13-hour chase in southern Indian Ocean waters near the tiny French possession of St Paul. A fisheries patrol vessel twice fired on the Southern Raider before sinking it because it refused to stop.

But it is now reported that the secret service, the DGSE, whose saboteurs sank the Rainbow Warrior in New Zealand last year, had been keeping their tags on another vessel for nearly three years, as it was suspected of espionage and gun-running to nationalists in the French Pacific Islands of New Caledonia.

The crew of the Southern Raider, which included a woman and several South Koreans, was taken to Reunion by the Albatross.

An hour from port, a helicopter landed on the bridge and Captain Chadderton says he was offered a deal by a uniformed officer and a man in plainclothes.

US frees cash for UN

By Jane Rosen

THE US has notified the United Nations Secretary-General, Perez de Cuellar, that it will pay $100 million to the UN's 1986 budget, which is roughly half the amount it is supposed to pay under the system of assessments.

Mr Perez de Cuellar estimates that the UN still needs at least another $20 million from the Americans if it is to meet its payroll and other fixed expenses this year.

In response, State Department officials say they will ask Congress to rescind another round of budget cuts affecting the UN, provided the General Assembly approves a package of administrative reforms drafted by a committee of 18 UN experts, including representatives of the Soviet Union and the Western countries. Besides reforming the UN's budgetary procedures it would give the big powers considerably more say in UN affairs.

Yamani replaced as oil chief

By John Hooper

SHEIKH AHMED ZAKI YAMANI, the man who came to symbolise the power of oil, has been removed from his post as Saudi Arabia's oil minister and replaced by Mr Hisham Nazer.

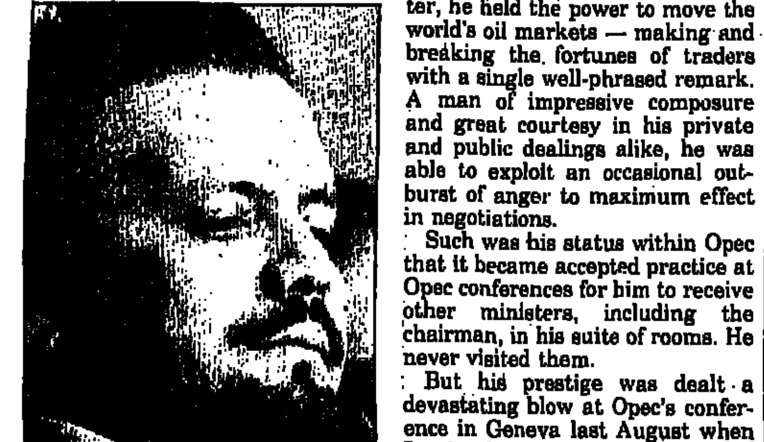
The disappearance of the oil industry's most influential figure and the architect of this year's price crash sent jitters through the world's crude markets.

Sheikh Yamani had been unwell for some time. He had complained to the small circle of correspondents whom he briefed at the conclusion of Opec conferences that he was suffering from a circulatory disorder, which he believed had been brought on by overwork and which gave him noticeably distended ankles and an unnaturally cold handshake.

But the announcement of his dismissal came 10 days after he had been humiliatingly contradicted by his own government during the course of the last Opec meeting, and it may be that this dropping of the oil industry's most celebrated and influential pilot heralds a change in Saudi Arabia's oil policy.

It was Sheikh Yamani who last December discreetly manoeuvred Opec into adopting the policy of boosting its market share, which was directly responsible for this year's oil price collapse.

His aim was to increase the demand for Opec oil and the power



Sheikh Yamani

of the cartel and of Saudi Arabia in particular over a 15-year period. Suspicions that his aims were not fully shared or appreciated by the Saudi Royal family grew with a succession of statements from the court appearing to contradict his assumptions.

The latest of these endorsed an extension of the Iranian-inspired pact which has almost doubled crude prices since last August and was issued less than 24 hours after Sheikh Yamani had publicly rejected such a move.

Right to the end of his marathon 24-year stint as Saudi oil minister, he held the power to move the world's oil markets — making and breaking the fortunes of traders with a single well-phrased remark. A man of impressive composure and great courtesy in his private and public dealings alike, he was able to exploit an occasional outburst of anger to maximum effect in negotiations.

Such was his status within Opec that it became accepted practice at Opec conferences for him to receive other ministers, including the chairman, in his suite of rooms. He never visited them.

But his prestige was dealt a devastating blow at Opec's conference in Geneva last August when Iran's oil minister, Mr Gholamreza Aghazadeh, scotched plans carefully laid by Saudi Arabia and her Gulf allies.

Mr Aghazadeh proposed that in the face of plunging prices, Opec should exempt his country's enemy, Iraq, on condition that the remaining 12 member states returned to their old output quotas. The agreement, unanimously adopted by the conference, very nearly doubled prices within the space of 48 hours and united the poorer members of the organisation behind Iran.

One of the first acts of the new minister, Mr Nazer, was to urge Opec to begin raising the price of oil by more than a quarter to at least $18 a barrel.

The sheikh not born to be king

By John Hooper

SHEIKH YAMANI has always been more highly appreciated in the West than in his own country and in recent years he found himself confronted by a growing array of powerful enimies.

His star role in the foreign media, which often portrayed him — wrongly — as the sole arbiter of the nation's oil policy was resented by other prominent Saudis, particularly *those* connected with *the Royal Family. It was not lost* on them that he was better known than the King.

Sheikh Yamani could not perhaps have prevented that. His name and his face were fixed irrevocably in people's minds in the wake of the first oil "shock" 12 years ago.

Nevertheless, he enjoyed the limelight and was not above playing up to the cameras. When Opec accepted an invitation *from the* Yugoslav government to hold its conference on an island in the Adriatic last summer, he arrived aboard a gleaming white motor launch wearing matching navy blue tunic and slacks with a gold chain around his neck. He had a sailor's cap in one hand and silver-topped cane in the other.

Even some of his Gulf allies felt that it struck a tactlessly ostentatious and frivolous note at a time when oil prices had fallen to their lowest real level for a decade, bringing great hardship to many of Saudi Arabia's poorer Opec partners.

For the average Saudi in the street, and for most Arabs outside the Kingdom, Yamani was simply too westernised. Ironically, in view of his bitter tussle with Mrs Thatcher's Government over oil policy, he was an instinctive Anglophile. His bodyguards were ex-SAS men led by a former officer in the Royal Horse Guards.

A more serious criticism of him was voiced by the rising generation of young Saudi professional and business men of whom the Western-educated Yamani was an early forerunner. "Yamani has not

Refineries have been built in the Kingdom to add value to the crude oil it pumps, but the products they generate are still marketed on a rather extemporary basis by the tight-knit circle around Dr Abdul Hady Hassan Taher, the governor of the state petroleum and minerals corporation, Petromin.

Petromin, for which Sheikh Yamani was ultimately responsible, has never evolved the kind of *long*-term marketing strategy adopted by its Kuwait counterpart and which bore fruit last month when KPC began marketing its own brand of petrol and lubricants in Europe.

While King Faisal and then King Khalid occupied the throne and for as long as the price and the volume of Saudi oil were increasing, Sheik Yamani was virtually immune from criticism. The accession four years ago of King Fahd, with whom he has a much more distant relationship, came just as the glut brought about by Opec's price rises was beginning to take effect.

Opec's response was to cut back its output to prop up its official prices. Saudi Arabia, guided by Yamani, agreed to take on the role of "swing producer". In practice, this meant that whenever it looked as if quota busting by other member states would breach the organisation's overall ceiling, the Saudis had to hold down their own output.

By the summer of last year, the Kingdom was producing no more than two million barrels a day — a fifth of its peak production. Several months earlier, the Supreme Petroleum Council, had decided that enough was enough. Plans were laid for the Kingdom to disown its "swing producer" role and start marketing crude according to its value on the open market.

By December, with the cartel's output running out of control, Opec had little option but to make Yamani's dismissal is that, having been blamed for the consequences of a policy aimed at keeping prices up by keeping production down, he now appears to have been made the scapegoat for one which aimed at restoring output by depressing prices.

He saw only too clearly that the "fair share" strategy needed to be applied rigorously if it were to succeed. In an address to the Swiss-Arab Chamber of Commerce earlier this year, he foresaw prices being kept at around two-thirds of their previous level until the end of the century. This, he forecast, would not only expand the demand for oil, but squeeze out of the system much of the crude production from non-Opec nations, putting the cartel back in the saddle some time in the 1990s.

But as the oil price plummeted, driven down as much by Sheikh Yamani's dire predictions as by the realities of supply and demand, it soon became clear that some influential figures in Saudi Arabia had doubts about the economic and political cost that this would entail.

The effects of the oil price crash on poorer nations in the Arab world has brought King Fahd under immense pressure, not least from the White House which can see only too clearly the impact that a sustained period of low prices would have on Egypt. Well-informed observers of the Kingdom add that an important factor was the susceptibility of Crown Prince Abdullah to complaints from the Syrians. The Crown Prince, who is married to a Syrian, is known to be close to Damascus.

However, the man most directly affected by the financial implications of, first, the drop in production and then the drop in prices, has been Mr Hisham Nazer, the planning minister who has taken on Sheikh Yamani's portfolio. Mr Edmund O'Sullivan, editor of the Middle East Economic Digest, who interviewed Mr Nazer last year, describes him as "an effective

Is a further dollar devaluation needed?

By Hamish McRae

THE gap is enormous, but the fact that it was just a little narrower than expected was enough for the markets. The September US trade figures showed a deficit of $12.56 billion for the month. This was a distinct improvement on the now-revised August deficit of $14.03 billion, and the $16.05 billion of July. This means that the trade deficit for the first months of the year has been running at an annual rate equivalent to $170.50 billion, compared with a deficit of $148.48 billion last year. So though there might be an apparent turn in the trade gap since July, *the annual rate is still running* well above last year.

But naturally enough, it is the trend which matters, and the markets were right to focus on that. From their point of view the basic question must surely be whether the present devaluation of the dollar will be sufficient over time to correct the deficit, or whether a further devaluation will be needed.

But devaluation against what currency?

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of these new figures is the way you can see some impact of the dollar's devaluation against the Japanese yen and the German mark, the currencies against which the dollar has fallen most. Where you do not see any impact, for the most obvious of reasons, is against the currencies where the dollar has not been significantly devalued.

Thus the trade deficit with Japan fell in the month to $4.12 billion, against $4.70 billion the month before; the deficit with Western Europe was down to £1.78 billion from $2.16 billion. Compare that with the deficit with Mexico, which nearly doubled to $439 million from $259 million. (Yes, for all the things you hear about Mexico's financial failings, the fact remains that she is a highly successful exporter to the US.) The deficit with Opec similarly rose to $1.09 billion from $679 million.

The exception to this pattern was Canada, for the two exchange rates have remained roughly stable, and the deficit still narrowed to $1.49 billion from $2.16 billion the month before.

Aside from the changes, though, the other point that stands out from these figures is the absolute numbers: for example, the fact that the trade deficit with Canada is almost as large as the trade deficit with the whole of Western Europe. Should not US trade policy be directed there?

This is just what is happening at the moment.

After the failure of the US to bully Germany and Japan to cut their interest rates, or to accept a further devaluation of the dollar, at the Washington finance ministers' meetings a month ago, US policy was redirected.

After all, roughly 60 per cent of the US trade was with countries which had not devalued against the dollar, while only the remaining 40 per cent was with countries like Japan and Germany, which had.

It made both political and practical sense to lay off Germany and Japan and concentrate attention elsewhere. The US policy-makers may even to some extent have accepted the intellectual position happened before calling for still further adjustments.

At any rate it is to the countries which have not devalued that attention has turned.

It is accepted by the US Administration that it is very difficult to do much about the deficit with Canada, or with the Latin American countries. With Canada, the two economies are too closely integrated for it to be possible to do very much.

There has been the odd measure. A couple of weeks back the US put a 15 per cent duty on Canadian lumber. But this was probably more a pre-election one-off event than part of any concerted drive to cut the deficit by imposing tariffs on imported products.

The US is similarly hamstrung with the deficit with Latin America. It makes no earthly sense to lend Mexico more money and then deny it the ability to service that debt by refusing to buy the country's exports. The same goes for the other major debtors, Brazil and Argentina.

The two countries most in the firing line are Taiwan and Korea, both of which have enormous trade surpluses with the US. Korea can argue, and has been arguing, that its foreign debt position is such that it must have *open export* access to the US to service its debts. This has not stopped the US from pressing for a significant revaluation of the Korean won. If the US does not get its way, we should expect direct retaliatory measures.

Taiwan, too, is under heavy pressure from the US. Here the foreign indebtedness is much more manageable. Indeed, Taiwan has very large reserves. Expect a significant revaluation or direct measures to limit the deficit, perhaps both.

Assuming this policy offensive works at least to some extent, where might it leave the trade deficit?

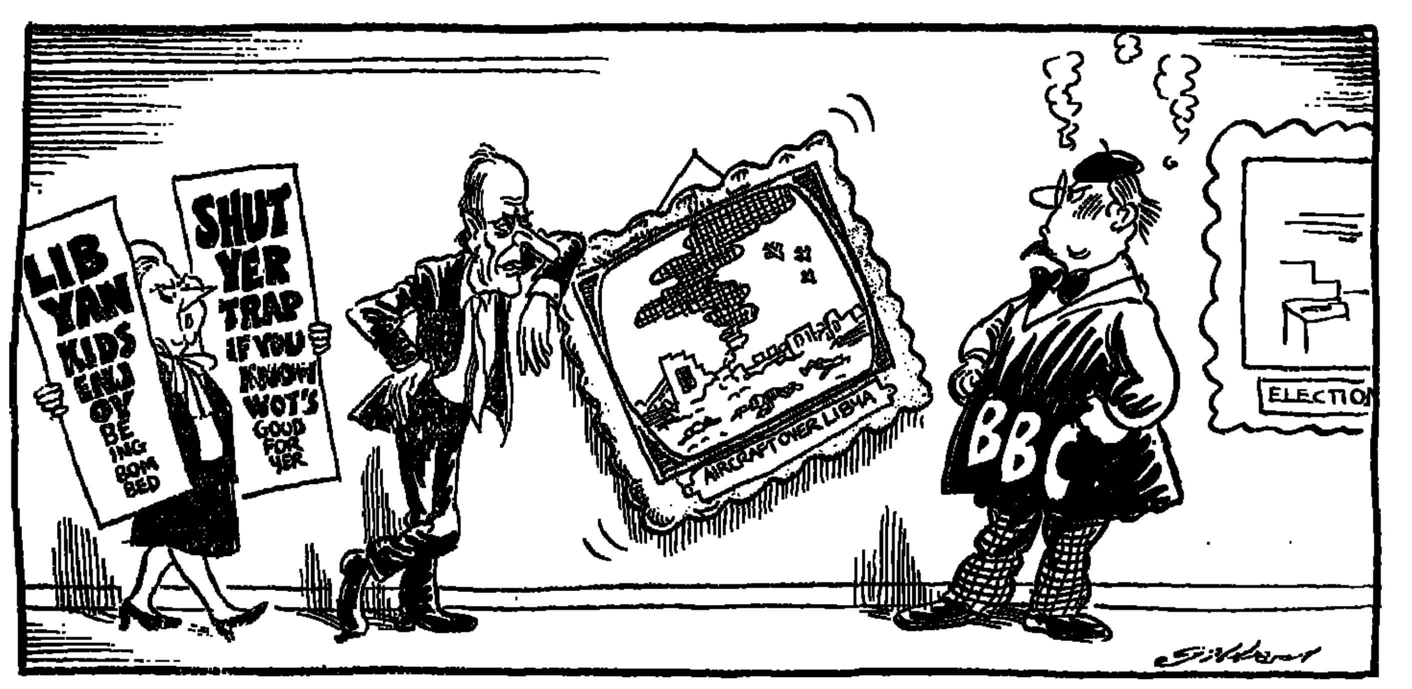
Conventional wisdom is now that the deficit is on a gradual declining trend. Merrill Lynch said that it expected the deficit to decline to $130 billion next year from an anticipated $160 billion this. This would add one percentage point to growth.

That is about as good a working assumption as you can get. But there are jokers. The oil price is one. Last month's improved trade figures came despite a sharp rise in the volume of oil imports (up 10 per cent), and a modest rise in the average price to $12.67 a barrel. That is appreciably below current prices.

Suppose that the new oil regime in Saudi Arabia is prepared to put the country back into the swing producer role, and we have an oil price securely back in the high teens? The gradual narrowing profile could go out of the window.

In truth the US Administration has found it utterly impossible to forecast the price of oil. It has a phalanx of computers predicting just about every variable which might affect the trade deficit. But when it comes to oil they simply look up the futures price in The Wall Street Journal, and stick that in.

In the short term, at least, the dollar looks more secure than it has for many weeks. But just remember the gloom that followed



"What a rotten slanted picture — I insist you have your eyes tested!"

The 'impartiality' of Mr Tebbit

MR TEBBIT, wreathed in a phoney cloak of latterday Reithianism, sets out to prove that the BBC's coverage of the Libyan bombing raids was biased and incompetent. He would be on happier ground, perhaps, if his "report" paid any attention to later developments; like the hardening belief that it was Syria and not Libya which played a part in the original Berlin discotheque bombing. But the Conservative chairman is not seeking to set such an informed context. He is out to prove a point. Lots of Conservatives, apparently, phoned Central Office to complain. Their complaints have been investigated. The BBC stands convicted of behaviour inappropriate to "a public service broadcasting system, funded by the taxpayer".

Bias tends to be in the eye of the beholder. Perhaps some BBC headlines about "world condemnation" might have been better itemised as European condemnation, Third World condemnation, or British public opinion condemnation. Perhaps the death of Gadafy's baby should have been whispered in parenthesis. But somewhere, around Page 97 or 977 of the Tebbit report, most readers will pause for reflection. The thesis is of a Conservative-bashing BBC and a pure, dispassionate, altogether perfect ITN. Well, Independent Television News does a splendid job: none better. But is its nine o'clock rival really so warped and decrepit? And the double standards are gargantuan. If the BBC, for instance, had commissioned Spitting Image, Mr Tebbit would have been issuing statements of denunciation every hour on the hour. Instead he creates a pristine vision of free market broadcasting (ITV) and then sets a still higher, still more ethereal standard for something "public" which is "funded by the taxpayer". A "subjective" and "confrontational" style is not "appropriate" in such circumstances, apparently. He doesn't say what would be appropriate: except, clearly, that it shouldn't precipitate dozens of telephone calls to Conservative activists.

To repeat: this is all too silly. It demeans politicians of weight — like Mr Tebbit — who play along with it. The name of the game is not some academic truth. It is to put the frighteners on the Corporation as an election nears: to stop the "confrontational" questions to ministers; to inhibit passing references to "subjective" matters like unemployment, to cow and intimidate the bureaucracy, and take the edge of independent thought away from journalists. Of course, any attack on standards of independence needs weighing carefully. And, of course, there are one or two things for the BBC to think about. But the overall thrust of the "report" is openly intimidatory. Broadcasters of both the BBC and the ITN should stand against it together (for they're all in the same boat). Anything else will do them great damage and leave the election agenda of what is "impartial" to be set by the chairman of the Conservative Party.•

(Report, page 6)

Adrift in the Falklands

CRISES don't long remain in abeyance. They wax; they wane; or are settled. No one has seriously tried to settle the Falklands crisis. For four years, it has remained in abeyance. Now it is coming back.

Typically, it is events on the ground and in the surrounding ocean that lead the diplomats by the nose. Many times during those four years, the indigenous Falklanders have asked Whitehall to declare a policed fishing zone around their coast. They wanted to develop a fishing industry. They saw trawlers from all over the world (and especially the Communist world) hoovering fish from their seas. But the Foreign Office couldn't stand the cost or the ruckus, and nothing was done. Then the Argentinians began to sign fishing treaties and grant rights to areas which they considered their own. Glumly, last week, the FO plopped off the fence, declaring prohibited areas — and pushing the Argentinians into angry denunciation. Meanwhile the military run-down on the islands — and thus their lightening burden on the taxpayer — looks to be in abeyance, too, as the RAF and Navy stands by to repel fishing boarders.

And yet, in the real world, it could all be utterly different. Buenos Aires, under a democratically elected President, has slashed defence spending. There is no possibility of another invasion. There is no reason on earth to continue the static state of theoretical hostility. Equally, though, there has been an absence of resolve to set the past to one side and move on. The argument has constantly drifted away from Britain. Every UN vote is sad humiliation. Even America thinks we're potty not to secure what is clearly on offer: a long-term, power-sharing deal, which would allow every islander to live out his or her days in security. But no: that opportunity has been irresolutely shunned — whilst the only real alternative, the full-throated development of the islands, has been nervelessly pushed to one side. Fortress Falklands sounds like resolution and stalwartness. In practice, it is merely drift.

(Report, page 4)

At last, a Government start in fighting Aids

THE setting up of Lord Whitelaw's Cabinet committee on Aids could be an important step towards a more serious public approach to the disease. It would be churlish not to welcome the Government's move. But there must still be real concern that it has come unnecessarily late, that it may be more of a public relations ploy than a real initiative, and that insufficient resources will be committed to the Aids campaign. Things are only beginning to move now (to the extent that they have) because there is a wider recognition that Aids affects heterosexuals as well as homosexuals. If a more serious approach had been taken two years ago, lives could have been prolonged.

High level attention to Aids is important. But it is vital that Lord Whitelaw and his team do more than just strike attitudes. This government is very sensitive to changing popular preoccupations, as reflected and orchestrated in the tabloid press and on television. In the past — on crime, on football hooliganism and on drugs — the announcement that a problem was being discussed at Downing Street was too often used as a lever to ensure pop headlines of the "Maggie's war on . . ." variety. Lots of good publicity and tough poses at first; afterwards, though, a strange silence and nothing much to show. That's where we may be on Aids, too. The Government may only be riding the waves of tabloid interest in Aids, some of which seem to treat the disease as merely a stage prop in the continuing national obsession with Dirty Den. If the Whitelaw committee is just an attempt to be seen to be doing something, then it will be a cruel deception. The committee therefore needs to prove that it is serious.

How can it do this? First, by treating Aids as an existing problem that needs to be solved — not as an excuse to moralise. In that sense, the fact that Mrs Thatcher herself is not directly involved in the initiative can only be good news. The more she stays out of it the better. Second, by recognising that Aids is an international problem. We already know that screening of visitors from particular African countries is being considered by Lord Whitelaw's group. But Aids is a global issue. Africa, to be sure, has real problems. But so, increasingly quickly, have America, Europe and much of the Third World, too. There needs to be international agreement about controls over its spread through travel. At the same time, though, there must be international recognition of the special problems that the Third World — with its very high dependence on reusable needles in health care — faces from the disease. Control and assistance must be indivisible. Aids must not be used as another excuse to whip up hostility against black people.

The real test of Lord Whitelaw's committee will be whether it puts substantial resources into research and control. Even if we wanted to screen the whole indigenous population for Aids, we probably don't have the resources to do it without massive planning and long delays. More immediately, it is absurd that Aids victims should be left to decline for lack of treatment. The experimental drug AZT, which has been shown to slow the disease, may not be a magic cure. But it has a role to play and it ought to be much more available here. On the preventive side, the Government must also commit itself to a frank public health campaign, emphasising the real dangers while dealing with the myths. Mass mailings, which are under consideration, have an obvious advantage in that people can keep and consult written material. But television advertising is going to have to be used too, and it will have to use words and terms which upset many people. That is distressing. But there is no real alternative. Lord Whitelaw and his colleagues must be prepared to follow through the logic of the setting-up of their committee. We know there is a crisis and a growing threat. That crisis has to be addressed as a matter of priority, and not just public relations.

Sinn Fein in the hot seats

SINN FEIN'S decision to end its abstentionist policy in the Irish Dail, a policy as old as the Republic, is a victory for Mr Gerry Adams and the younger spirits against the old guard, mainly in the South and mainly outside Dublin. It marks the biggest change in republican strategy since the split between the Provisional and Official IRA in 1970. The established parties will need time to come to terms with the decision, but it is bound to affect the conduct even of the next general election. Sinn Fein, under Proportional Representation, may win a seat or two then, though they will be lucky to do so, but now that there is a serious candidate for deep green republicans to vote for the contest in the border areas between Sinn Fein and Fianna Fail will be all the keener. Every vote taken from Fianna Fail is liable to upset the balance, even under PR, in favour of Fine Gael.

In advocating this shift Mr Adams, backed by the IRA's army council, said Sinn Fein had failed in the South. The Irish parliament, he said, was not seen as illegitimate by voters simply because it did not represent all 32 counties. The Workers' Party, which traces its descent to the old Official IRA, is doing progressively better at the polls and Mr Adams envies its success. But it has also transformed itself entirely from the political wing of a terrorist organisation into a pacific and non-sectarian socialist party. Sinn Fein, it was clear from the speeches at the annual conference in Dublin, has no stated intention of following that route. It is as fully committed to the Armalite as to the ballot box, and indeed the obvious likelihood is that in the near future the military campaign will be intensified, simply to reassure the old-timers that their cause is not forgotten. The twin-track policy already appeals to Sinn Fein members who have taken council seats in the North and conduct business there. Sinn Fein may have no hope of joining a government in the South but PR could eventually give it an influential position in a hung Dail.

Inside the republican movement, as the vote showed, the abstentionists are still a substantial force. They may toe the new line, disappear through attrition, or form another break-away. In the short run every violent inducement will be offered in the North for them to remain. But it is among the established parties that the strategists will be busy analysing what Sinn Fein's emergence from the chrysalis means for them. For example Mr Charles Haughey has recently strengthened Fianna Fail's opposition to the Anglo-Irish Agreement. That puts him on the side of Sinn Fein in the North and in opposition to the Social Democratic and Labour Party, which was his partner in the New Ireland Forum. Yet in Counties Monaghan and Cavan, for example, it is Sinn Fein which is liable to steal his votes. The advent of the Progressive Democrats under Mr Des O'Malley has already upset the Republic's electoral calculations, most especially those of Fine Gael. Sinn Fein is now a further complication. But what if Sinn Fein comes eventually to find the twin tracks of its policy incompatible? That was what the Officials found. Faced with the choice they opted for the ballot box and discarded the gun. If that were at the back of Mr Adams's mind the vote would be even more significant. Events will tell, but so far there is no reason to believe they will fall out that way.

(Report, page 3)

Le Monde ENGLISH SECTION

The government did not deny the information published in Le Monde on October 29 that France had secured the suspension of terrorist attacks with the help of Syria and Algeria. In the National Assembly, Foreign Minister Jean-Bernard Raimond however announced that France had "blocked" all deliveries of weapons to Damascus in fulfilment of contracts signed in 1982 and 1984. And Interior Minister Charles Pasqua confirmed last Thursday that "useful" contacts had been made with Syria and Algeria but refused to be drawn out on the article in Le Monde.

A question of credibility

By André Fontaine

NOBODY, writes the Wall Street Journal, is prepared to pay any more attention to what French ministers say about what is or is not happening behind the scenes. It is a cruel verdict, even if it is as applicable to today's ministers as yesterday's.

Last year, the government of Laurent Fabius kept announcing its determination to get to the bottom of the Greenpeace business while at the same time making the clumsiest possible attempts to hush it all up. Jacques Chirac's government made not the slightest effort, until the press became involved, to explain to the public why it ducked answering Margaret Thatcher's appeal for collective action. And when Le Monde produced explanations whose consistency no one could deny, the least that can be said of the reactions of government ministers and its spokesman is that they did not reach the same level of consistency.

(Foreign Minister) Jean-Bernard Raimond, a career diplomat and as courteous and collected a man as you are ever likely to meet who normally prefers to hold his tongue rather than spin yarns, did not hesitate to speak of "disinformation", but omitted to explain to what precisely he was referring. (Interior Minister) Charles Pasqua, though of an altogether different stamp, refused to make any comment. True, at the very moment the "Iron Lady" was urging EEC members to stand firmly with her, he had made a solid contribution to the case by extolling the efficiency of the collaboration between French and Syrian police forces in an interview published in a Saudi Arabian weekly.

Finally, the Prime Minister's spokesman, Denis Baudoin, denied there had been any "negotiations with terrorists", but conceded that "messages (passed on) to certain states" had helped "to halt the terrorism, even if temporarily." This is pretty much what Le Monde said.

Let it be only noted that, as everybody knows Syria is one of those "certain states" to which France is referring, when Baudoin speaks in this way he dissociates himself from the premise — about which neither London nor the UDF (the ruling Majority's coalition partner, Union pour la Démocratie Française) has the slightest doubt — that the state in question is itself a "terrorist" state. A premise not unfounded, even where France is concerned, since it is common knowledge that the assassination of the former French ambassador in Beirut, Louis Delamare — even if it was a "slip-up", as they say — was the work, if not of the Syrians, at least of Syrians, and that the same is true of the 1982 bomb attack on the offices of an Arabic periodical on the Rue Marbeuf in Paris.

There hardly seems to be any doubt at all as far as fundamental issues are concerned. A qualified Israeli observer told me recently in private: "Behind the bombs in Paris, there is the Abdallah family and a very small group (the FARL). Syria neither ordered nor prevented the attacks from taking place." The French Prime Minister's office is making the same analysis, unless we are much mistaken. Hence the thought that crosses the mind — and you cannot condemn it without being quite frivolous — of turning to Syria and urging it to use what means it has to prevent such attacks in the future considering that the Abdallahs live in a region which is under its control and the FARL is roughly in the same domain.

Many go-betweens would appear to have been involved, including in all probability Algeria and Monsignor Hilarion Capucci, whose arrival in Paris and visit to Georges Ibrahim Abdallah in his prison were obviously not part of a simple tourist circuit. One result was achieved: a suspension of the bomb attacks.

On the surface, you would have to be out of your mind not to be grateful for this. Everything naturally depends on the price paid for obtaining this result. We must not fool ourselves though: blackmail and horsetrading have from time imemorial been the sustaining force of diplomacy.

So some more or less vague promises must have been made to the "states" to which Denis Baudoin passed on "messages", or at least they must have been assured that something or other would be done in their favour. Given the timing of the event, it is difficult for example not to draw a connection between the arrest of (former Algerian President) Ahmed Ben Bella's followers and the part played in this case by Algeria, with which France's relations today are, according to the Matignon, excellent. It is difficult also not to see a connection between the delivery of French wheat to a Syria in desperate economic straits and the "control" that it has apparently agreed to exercise on the Abdallah family.

Was more promised? Confusion has arisen as a result of conversations that armaments manufacturers have had in Damascus apparently not without the Defence Ministry's go-ahead. But the Quai d'Orsay is still opposed to selling arms to Syria and we must take note of the statement that Denis Baudoin made on October 30 to the effect that no arms have been delivered to Syria since March 16 (when the new government was elected). Why couldn't he have said so before?

Finally, was a deal worked out with the Abdallahs themselves? We cannot imagine the French government instructing one of its emissaries to promise that in February 1987 the high court in Paris will let Georges Ibrahim Abdallah off lightly. There are limits to the non-separation of powers. It is easier to imagine an intermediary, anxious to ensure the success of his efforts, holding out some such vague promise on his own initiative.

In any case, one clear conclusion seems to emerge from all this. The government has done what it could in a situation that was admittedly not easy. It has put the safety of its nationals before solidarity with Britain. "In the Big Power club," wrote General de Gaulle, "I've encountered as many monumental egoisms as there are members." But the fact remains — until it is proved otherwise — that though it behaved like a terrorist state in London and Lebanon and even in France just recently, Syria is now in search of respectability and is being cooperative with Paris. It was (former Justice Minister Alain Peyrefitte himself who asked the other day in Le Figaro: "How would it help if we severed relations with it (Syria)?"

Where the government really goofed was when it tried to hide the policy it was pursuing, even saying the opposite of what it was doing and giving the impression it was ashamed of it. The best way to avoid having to give explanations one day is to spell out one's objectives clearly.

(November 1)

France pays fulsome tribute to Syria

By Edwy Plenel

A FOREIGN MINISTER who denies without denying, an Interior Minister who refuses to make any comment. This, roughly, was the attitude adopted by the government last week following Le Monde's disclosures. Foreign Minister Raimond pointed out that Le Monde's investigation substantiated the government's claims concerning the "Abdallah trail" and the decisive role that the FARL played in the series of explosions.

Somewhat awkwardly, while assuring "no deals" had been done, he did not deny that "a number of contacts were made by the Interior Ministry." Later, addressing the National Assembly, he was firmer and categorically announced that deliveries of weapons to Syria had been put on hold. But he added that he was "irritated" — and spectators felt it — by a campaign of "disinformation".

A doubtless unfortunate word that his fellow minister at Interior refused to use. Looking less embarrassed, Pasqua did not round on journalists, but said they were doing their job. "Le Monde is not the 'Journal Officiel'," he observed (the Journal Officiel is the official record of all business conducted at the National Assembly). He did however give the assurance that he had "never granted a certificate of total remission to Syria" and repeated that France had obtained useful information from this country.

All the same, the tribute he paid to Franco-Syrian cooperation in the interview he gave the Saudi weekly Al Majalla (it is published in Arabic in London), was backed by a statement that the Syrian Vice-President Abdel Halim Khaddam made on a French television network: "The Syrian government has given very clear directives to its security services to cooperate with the French police forces so as to arrest those responsible for the attacks in Paris."

As for Elie Hobeika's spokesman in Paris, he confirmed that the former Lebanese Forces commander was recently in Paris, but explained he had taken a regular Syrian Airlines flight and not Michel Murr's private plane.

In short, the government is not denying the description given of its strategy since September 17 — counting on Syria and Algeria to lean on the terrorists by holding out to them the possibility of Georges Ibrahim Abdallah being let off lightly while at the same time threatening them with reprisals if the truce were broken. The

Continued on page 12

Flow of grain continues

DESPITE political tension between Syria and Britain and official EEC expressions of support for Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's stand, nothing appears to have changed in the flow of European grain to Syria. In 1985-1986 France delivered 342,000 metric tons of wheat and 30,000 tons of wheat flour to Syria. In October there was a shipment of 2,219 tonnes as additional food aid supplied by the EEC. The amount due to be shipped in November is 18,000 tonnes.

Syria's requirements are estimated to be about a million metric tons of wheat a year. The difference between this and the deliveries actually made is made up partly by United States and other European exports. US wheat-growers have been authorised to sell 700,000 tonnes to Syria, but deliveries do not appear to have started, probably for political reasons. This would appear to explain why only last week the Syrians were trying to negotiate an additional purchase of grain from France, which international trade circles put at around 500,000 tonnes.

The wheat currently delivered to Syria is sold at $72 a tonne, whereas the official price is about $182. The difference is made up from the Community budget, a fact likely to be galling to the British; for, like all the Community members, Britain is also subsidising deliveries of wheat to a country with which it has severed diplomatic relations.

(November 1)

South Korea: the US's problem-child in Asia

The repression is mounting in South Korea where some 7,000 policemen stormed Seoul's Konkuk University on Friday last week to clear it of students who been occupying it to protest against the government of President Chun Doo Hwan and the United States's role in the country. The police arrested 1,185 students. The authorities announced that those who took part in what they describe as a 'pro-communist' demonstration would be 'severely punished'.

THE CLASHES that took place at Konkuk University are very likely to ring the curtain down on President Chun Doo Hwan's very modest moves to liberalise the South Korean regime. It is not even possible to rule out a reimposition of martial law, which the government has said it would resort to in the evnt of disturbances.

It is doubtful in fact if the harshness the government demonstrated last week will put an end to the agitation affecting an increasing number of universities. After the suspension of protests in view of the Asian Games, the South Korean authorities are likely to find difficult to avoid an escalation in the face of the determination of the country's youth which is sick of having the communist bogey raised every time the restoration of fundamental liberties is demanded.

To appease public opinion, Chun has promised to step down in 1988. So, for the first time in the country's history, power would change hands in an orderly manner. And this would indeed appear to be a logical progression given the level of development and modernistion of South Korea's society. If this scenario were to be applied, it would make a remarkable improvement to the image of

COMMENT

a country that has long looked like an American appendage in Asia.

But these new clashes raise serious doubts as to the possibility of such a change. Especially as the moderate opposition to the regime is asking questions about the real intentions of the President who persists in refusing to consider two of its demands — the opening of a dialogue and a referendum on the constitution.

The parliamentary opposition, embroiled in its own internal bickering, has allowed itself to be locked into an argument over the draft constitution which cannot be said to be generating great interest among the public at large. And it has proved incapable of channelling the pressures of a student movement which has become radicalised to the point of demanding the withdrawal of American troops stationed in South Korea and a thorough reappraisal of Seoul's relations with Pyongyang.

South Korea is once again looking in American eyes like a difficult ward, particularly when North Korea is moving closer towards the Soviet Union, as was shown by the warmth of the welcome extended to Kim Il Sung during his recent visit to Moscow. Washington is all the more fearful of new tensions in the Korean peninsula as the situation of another of its Asian allies, the Philippines, is still nowhere near stable.

(November 1)

Elie Hobeika is key in French pressure on FARL

By Georges Marion and Edwy Plenel

FRANCE IS COUNTING on Syria and Algeria to prevent a resumption of terrorist activities on its territory. Syrian and Algerian heads of secret services, including Algeria's director of military security General Lakhal Ayad, are said to have forced the Abdallah terrorist clan to agree to suspend its activities. The latter would appear to have agreed to suspend terrorist attacks until February 1987 when Georges Ibrahim Abdallah is due to be put on trial.

If the Abdallah clan reneges on its promise, the French government is said to have planned retaliation against the FARL (Lebanese Armed Revolutionary Factions) with the help of Elie Hobeika, the former commander of the Lebanese Forces militia and an ally of Syria who now lives in Damascus.

While accusing fingers are being pointed at Syria from all sides, French Interior Minister Charles Pasqua awards Damascus a seal of respectability. "Syrian leaders are showing a great deal of goodwill towards France, and I think that from now on there will be genuine cooperation between Syrian and French services," said Pasqua in an interview published last week in the Saudi Arabian Arabic weekly Al Majalla. The minister gave an assurance that Syrian leaders "were very distressed and stunned by the accusations made against their country." The Syrian leaders, Pasqua added, are anxious "to show us by their attitude that they had no hand in this case (the series of September bomb attacks in Paris), but that they were prepared to do everything possible to help us."

At a pinch these are provocative statements to make just when London has broken off diplomatic relations with Damascus following the trial and conviction of Nezar Hindawi, who unsuccessfully attempted to blow up an El Al plane on April 17. Syrian responsibility in terrorism is likely to be pointed up once again when Nezar Hindawi's brother, Ahmed Asi, comes up for trial in West Berlin for complicity in the April 5 bombing of the La Belle discotheque.

It is also known that the perpetrators of the September bomb blasts, for whom wanted posters have been put up in France — the FARL, whose prime movers are the Abdallah brothers — are historically linked to Syria whose territorial ambitions in Lebanon they support.

The French Interior Ministry is not denying Pasqua's statements. The interview was a curtain-raiser to the four-day visit that Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben Abdel Aziz began in Paris on October 27. As it happens, Pasqua's remarks were not off-the-cuff. They are in fact carefully weighed statements consistent with Prime Minister Jacques Chirac's options to head off further terrorist attacks.

Paris is counting on Syria. The earlier visits by French officials, especially Minister of Cooperation Michel Aurillac and DST head Bernard Gérard, to Damascus were already significant enough. What is less well known is that there have been many other contacts and a truce was recently concluded with the men who planted the bombs in Paris.

The message was this: if no terrorist attacks take place until February 1987, the trial of Georges Ibrahim Abdallah, who is held in France, could turn to his advantage. And the messengers were Syrian secret service officials and Algeria's head of military security, General Lakhal Ayad. And the threat: an agreement — a "contract" — concluded early in October in Paris with Elie Hobeika, former commander of the Lebanese Forces Christian militia, now a Syrian ally, for him to take physical retaliatory action against the FARL and the Abdallah clan if they break the truce.

Since the terrorist bomb attacks stopped on September 17, the French government has been trying to get through to the bombers that the more they persist in such attacks the less likely they are to obtain the FARL leader's release.

All the information gathered by the police points to the Akkar plain in northern Lebanon, the cradle of FARL, as the starting point of the wave of terrorist bombings. This is where the villages of Kobayat and Andakat are situated; it is here that activists of the Syrian National Social Party (SNSP), a pan-Syrian Lebanese party, are trained, and it is also here that they forged links with the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine headed by Dr George Habash, who is also a Christian.

Following their own investigations and after examining information they regard as "reliable", the police are convinced that Robert Ibrahim Abdallah and Salim El Khoury are among the perpetrators of the bomb attacks in Paris. On the other hand, they have more reservations about the role of Emile Abdallah: despite a number of witnesses' accounts implicating him in the Rue de Rennes bombing, they have failed to prove that he flew back to Lebanon via Vienna and Larnaca (Cyprus). They are moreover cautious concerning the last two bomb explosions in September — at the police prefecture and the Rue de Rennes — where a different explosive was used, and responsibility for which was not explicitly claimed by the CSPPA (Committee for Solidarity with Arab Political Prisoners, the name under which the FARL carried out its terrorist campaign).

But the police have absolutely no doubt about the involvement of the network run by the Abdallah brothers (Joseph, Robert, Maurice and Emile) whose frequent trips to and from Paris, via Cyprus, until July had been proved.

But, they add, the Abdallah network acted with "a certain degree of independence". In other words, Syria — which has maintained a military presence in the Abdallah stronghold since 1976 — knew what was going on but let it continue, because Damascus could serve as a go-between. The message sent is in line with the logic of last spring's negotiations which almost ended in Georges Abdallah's release. Already sentenced in Lyons to four years in gaol, he will be tried in Paris for involvement in the 1982 slaying of two diplomats, an American and an Israeli, a charge it will be legally difficult to substantiate.

The deadline has been set for February, as Justice Minister Albin Chalandon acknowledged at the end of September. But a lull in terrorist activities, the weakness of the charges and Security Minister Robert Pandraud's recent visit to Washington to assure the US of French cooperation are all factors that could benefit FARL's leader.

To get the message across, France made a deal with Syria and Algeria over the heads of the Abdallah clan. As the satirical weekly Le Canard Enchaîné revealed, two close aides of Interior Minister Pasqua — Jean-Charles Marciani, a special services veteran, and Iskander Safa — established the preliminary contacts. The DST took over from there. The DST emissary who visited Damascus on October 9, after department head Bernard Gérard's visit, went to some of the areas under Syrian control. The Syrian secret service, headed by Ali Dubas, gave strict instructions to the FARL and threatened them with reprisals if the attacks were resumed. At the same time Algeria mediated by sending its head of military security, General Lakhal Ayad, to Lebanon.

In all these negotiations, Algeria is an obligatory intermediary. The reason is simple. One section of the Algerian FLN (National Liberation Front) is said to have helped this network in the past — out of "solidarity" — and provided in 1984 the authentic Algerian passport made out to Abdelkader Saadi, which was found on Georges Ibrahim Abdallah when he was arrested in Lyons. In short, Algeria has its contacts with the FARL and has proved it in the past, especially when Gilles Sidney Peyroles was released. In return for this help from Algeria, France has put the screws on opponents of President Shadli Benjeddid's regime who are living in France. Thirteen members or sympathisers of the MDA (Algerian Democratic Movement) headed by former Algerian President Ahmed Ben Bella (now living in exile in Switzerland) were arrested. The public outcry stopped the government from expelling them, but we now know that three of the more active among them — Saad Absi, Brahim Kentour and Mrs Khe'ira Berhaba — were originally due to be sent directly to Algiers (at the request of the Algerian government) under the "absolute emergency" procedure utilised for packing Basque ETA refugees in France off to Spain.

Then remains the threat. The privileged interlocutor here was Elie Hobeika, a frequent visitor to Paris. He arrived in the second week of October, landing at Le Bourget in a private plane belonging to the Lebanese multimillionaire Michel Murr, who used to be a former minister and is an aide of Hobeika. Hobeika's French contacts asked him to be ready to "waste" some of the FARL members if the bombings were resumed. What was France giving in return for this? In all probability, as Libération, Le Matin and The Sunday Times claim, money and weapons to Syria and its Lebanese allies.

(October 30)

Fulsome tribute to Syria

Continued from page 11

Interior Minister is convinced that the government is pursuing a legitimate goal with its secret diplomacy, which aimed at preventing a resumption of the terrorism. But this policy obviously poses a problem for France's diplomatic posture at a time when some of its allies have insistently pointed to light President Hafez el-Assad's involvement in international terrorism.

On top of this diplomatic discrepancy, there are two other obstacles. First, a legal one: there is absolutely no guarantee that the court will deal leniently with Georges Ibrahim Abdallah when he comes up for trial next February. The United States, which has joined as a private party in the prosecution's action, does not seem to be ready to give up. Then again, apart from proclamations of judicial independence, a jury trial — given the climate of insecurity — is on the face of it less open to manipulation than a police court procedure and is more receptive to the prevailing mood.

So we cannot exclude the possibility that the "truce" deadline imposed on the FARL is a trap, with the French government counting on Syrian determination — if necessary, backed up with force — to prevent a new terror campaign in the event of Georges Abdallah being convicted.

The second is a police hurdle. The line that the government is taking presupposes increased political and diplomatic manipulation of the police establishment. Round-ups, return favours done to Algeria by cracking down on its opponents living in France — irrelevant goals for policemen who are supposed to catch authentic culprits — are coming under increasing criticism from criminal investigation department officers. They have their own professional moral code and take a severe view of attempts to bend their mission to political ends.

All told, what the government has is more a tactic than a strategy. And it has a short-term goal — preventing public opinion from being destabilised under terrorist pressure. These objectives do not seem to be underpinned by authentic ambitions for French policy in the Middle East. If France appears to be going it alone and standing back from its Western partners, it is because in the government's thinking the logic of the "sanctuary" has got the upper hand — make sure first that France is no longer a terrorist target.

(October 31)

French troops in Lebanon get behind the barricades

By Françoise Chipaux

TYRE — "Death to France!" The writing on observation post 3.II.A's white elevated lookout turret was clearly visible. Sandbags and twisted metal are all that is left of the many checkpoints Unifil's French contingent had established. The sign "French Batt." still hangs at the entrance to the former Maarakó headquarters, but it is now manned by Ghanaian soldiers. Besides, none of them is visible. In the "iron triangle" of opposition to Israel, which has now become a mecca for the Hezbollahs, Nepalese and Ghanaian soldiers who replaced the French troops, have stopped making roadchecks and now remain at their positions.

At the entrance to Abbassieh, a Nepalese soldier watched smiling from his sentrybox as the cars drove by. What and who the vehicles were transporting were no longer his business. The French headquarters is still at Jouaya, a small town of 15,000 inhabitants where Shi'ite immigrants from Africa measure their success by the size of their houses. In the villa at the top of the town, some 160 soldiers still testified to the French presence. With two other points each manned by about 60 men, they were all that were left of Unifil's French contingent in the operational sector. These soldiers practically never venture forth now and at night sleep at their positions. Their main mission is to protect themselves — their redeployment looks very much like a fallback in preparation for a withdrawal in case of another attack. Besides, what else could they do behind their earth barricades which they are continually reinforcing.

Cut off from the local people, hence from intelligence sources, they have been deprived of both "eyes and ears" and this does not fail to worry their officers.

Harassment of Unifil troops stopped three weeks ago — no further signs of activity have been noticed since September 28. But it is thought to be only a lull for which everybody has his own and different explanation. The most obvious one being perhaps that Unifil's withdrawal to better protected positions makes the attackers' jobs more difficult. Unless again, as some believe, the reason behind the lull is that an over-hasty Unifil withdrawal could bedevil the plans of the Hezbollahs who may want to keep this force as a hostage for some more time yet and thus as a bargaining chip in any South Lebanon settlement.

For once everybody agrees that Unifil's departure will cause much havoc in South Lebanon and nobody can say who will emerge victorious in the end. However that may be, there is no doubt that the Hezbollahs are gaining ground daily and the Iranian hold is increasingly evident. Militarily, the substantial and sophisticated means used with daunting effectiveness against Unifil and the South Lebanese Army (SLA, a militia body set up and financed by Israel) suggest that Iranian officers are advising their followers directly in the field. While the Hezbollah training camps are still in the Bekaa, several witnesses have confirmed that Iranian religious men and soldiers are shuttling to and from South Lebanon.

The Hezbollahs' military power is still hard to assess precisely, for its militiamen men never identify themselves as such and, unlike the Amal militiamen, do not have well established barracks or positions. "Mosques and houses make do as arms caches for them," confided a local inhabitant, and they operate in small, tightly organised bands. Their training under the command of Iranian instructors is far and away the most rigorous. They have no problems where weapons and money are concerned as they are by far the best-paid militiamen in Lebanon today — a pay of around LL 4,000 a month, compared with LL 2,000 to LL 3,000 for an Amal or PSP (the Druze-dominated Progressive Socialist Party) militiamen. Iran is thought to be spending between $7 million and $9 million in Lebanon. With the US dollar now worth LL45, it is easy to understand how some village sheikhs can pay $300 to $400 for an attack on a Unifil post.

This new Hezbollah force, which is recruited mainly among young men, should not hide the fact that the movement is not popular in

Bertrand Tavernier's latest film, recently released in France, is called "Autour de Minuit", after a well-known Thelonius Monk composition, "Round about Midnight". It chronicles the sad decline of a jazz saxophonist, Dale Turner, in 1950s Paris. The role of Dale Turner, which combines certain elements from the lives of Lester Young and Bud Powell, is played by real-life jazz saxophonist Dexter Gordon. Critics have acclaimed his acting in the film. Here, he talks to Francis Marmande about his experiences as a budding film actor.

Musician turned actor scores hit with critics

Interview by Francis Marmande

Did you have much say in the making of "Autour de Minuit"?

Yes. Bernard Tavernier and I had long chats every day, discussing the dialogue and everything to do with jazzmen's language — you know, whether it sounded right to me and that kind of thing. Tavernier is a real jazz fan.

If he didn't love jazz, he'd never have got to make the film. But since jazz musicians, particularly in the 50s, used a very special kind of jargon, the dialogue was bound to cause problems. I tried not to overdo the language, which was inventive, poetic and very funny; but it had to sound as genuine as possible.

Sometimes a line in the screenplay struck me as a bit odd, just like a note or a chord that is out of tune. When we started shooting, Tavernier said to me: "Dexter, this is your film." And he kept it that way. We constantly discussed details, like how to speak and move.

I felt free to say: "No, that won't work." There were sentences I just couldn't speak properly. But Tavernier didn't mind and we got on very well together. I greatly enjoyed shooting the film.

Had you ever acted in a film before?

No, not in a real part. I can be glimpsed in films like "Atlantic City Honeymoon" or "Pillow to Post", but always playing a jazz musician. I did act in a play, though, in Jack Gelber's "The Connection", which ran for a year in Hollywood. It was first put on by the Living Theatre in New York with Jackie McLean.

Playing music and acting are basically the same thing: the podium is like a stage with its spotlights and its mikes. When I hold up my saxophone as I do at the end of a concert or a night-club set, when I announce the title of a piece or introduce the musicians, it's a form of theatre.

The image of the jazz musician I try to put across in the film is one of dignity and self-respect, as well as the very human dimension I've found in all the musicians I've known. This film is very good news for the jazz world because of the respect it shows for that kind of music.

It's a very salutary attitude, especially when you remember the way jazzmen are regarded in the United States. They are much more respected in Europe. The minute you arrive over here you are treated like an artist. You don't need a huge automobile and equally huge bank account to get accepted. I realised this when I first came to Europe in 1962, first to Copenhagen, then to Paris.

In Europe jazz players are regarded as real musicians. It's not surprising that films like "Autour de Minuit", which pay homage to jazz and the great jazz figures, are almost never made by American directors.

Do you think that today's performers are as good as their predecessors?

Oh yes, musicians like Woody Shaw, Freddie Hubbard, Wayne Shorter, Herbie Hancock and Billy Higgins seem to me to have carried on the tradition handed down to them by the previous generation — people like the pianist Bud Powell, whom I adulated, and the saxophonists Charlie Parker and Lester Young.

In the film, I'm asked who my favourite tenor sax players are, and I reply: Coleman Hawkins, Lester Young, Don Byas and Ben Webster. Actually the person in the film who answers that question is not me, but the character I play, Dale Turner. But I guess we're very much one and the same.

For the film I borrowed little character traits from a number of different players. It was Lester, for example, who called everyone and everything "Lady", including his saxophone and Billie Holiday. It was part of the way he talked. He was constantly coming up with new, poetic inventions.

A lot of jazz language originated with him. He was the first person to call New York "The Big Apple", and it caught on. Lester was a charming guy, very sensitive, very well-dressed. On top of that, no one could play like him.

(September 23)

Saxophone loses its 'uncool' image

By Michel Castaing

NOT so long ago, the saxophone was regarded by the younger generation as a decidedly "uncool" and old-fashioned instrument. There are signs that in France at least things are changing. The saxophone — which was developed in 1846 by the celebrated Belgian inventor of musical instruments, Adolphe Sax (1814-1894) — is the subject of a new book (published by Joseph Clims), "Histoires de Saxophone" by François Billard, a journalist on Jazz Magazine.

The saxophone has also recently featured on many magazine covers (New Look, Rock and Folk, Télérama). It stars in some television commercials (for Dim stockings, for example). And, of course, it plays a central role in Bertrand Tavernier's new film, "Autour de Minuit".

Such are fashion's whims. In the 1960s, interest in jazz waned as young people went for the new sounds of rock and pop, and in the process the saxophone was ousted by electric guitars and electronic keyboard instruments. But now, because of its sensuous, serpentine shape and, to a lesser extent, its sound, the instrument has most definitely come back into vogue.

The saxophone's sound is redolent of two very different worlds — the nostalgic, smoke-filled atmosphere of New Orleans in the 20s, and the industrial age as symbolised by the instrument's complicated system of vents.

The reason the saxophone caught on was the emergence of two masterly tenor sax players, Coleman Hawkins and Lester Young, both of them black Americans, who inspired a generation of disciples. It was the alto sax Charlie Parker, though, who in the mid-40s introduced bop, the first major revolution in jazz history.

The sound of the saxophone has an almost physical presence and a warm, velvety timbre. What is more, a young beginner can get a reasonable sound out of it fairly early on. "You can learn to play it very quickly, if not necessarily very well," says Billard, "which is not true, for example, of the trumpet."

Some schools, such as the Berkeley School, have adopted Japanese-style teaching methods, and this may be responsible for the increasing favour enjoyed by the saxophone among young people.

Music teachers in France are apparently not too happy about the situation, as it means that there and fewer candidates for trumpet, trombone or violin lessons.

The classical saxophone in fact never went out of fashion in France, or at least not since a special saxophone class was instituted at the Paris Conservatoire in 1942, almost a century after the instrument's invention. The man responsible for the resurrection of the classical saxophone, which had long been ignored and even despised except by military bandsmen, was Marcel Mule, now 85.

Daniel Deffayet, who took over Mule's class after the latter's retirement, says that since 1942 the number of saxophone pupils at the Paris Conservatoire has never varied. There have always been 12 French pupils and a maximum of four from abroad. "This year," he says, "70 candidates are competing for three places."

The French school is world-renowned for its original sound — "a full sound with a little, but not too much, timbre," Deffayet says, "and an extremely well-sustained air column."

Thanks to Marcel Mule, saxophone teachers have proliferated in French provincial *conservatoires*. But there is a problem: the ability to play the classical saxophone can be exploited in virtually only one way — by teaching. Apart from that, there is only a slim chance of getting accepted by one of the five leading French military bands, including the Garde Républicaine, or getting half a foot into a symphony orchestra (there are relatively few orchestral works which demand a saxophone).

The astoundingly competent jazz or pop saxophonists that are to be heard in the Métro or the streets of Paris are almost all former Conservatoire pupils.

Billard notes that Paris now has more thriving jazz clubs, and therefore more happy saxophonists, than New York. The only major jazz festival that has survived in the United States is the Newport (since transferred to New York), whereas important festivals are held in Antibes, Nice and Paris, as well as in the rest of Europe (Montreux, The Hague, West Berlin).

The golden age of the jazz saxophone — the 1930s, when it succeeded in dethroning the trumpet despite Louis Armstrong's great talent — now seems a long way away. Much of its lustre disappeared when the big bands, headed by people like Duke Ellington, Count Basie, Lionel Hampton and Dizzy Gillespie, broke up — often for financial reasons, or following the frequently premature death (through drink or drugs) of great soloists — and when new musical fashions, as exemplified by the Beatles' style for example, took over.

Has the jazz saxophone gone into irreversible decline? Or is it just suffering a temporary eclipse? Purists and nostalgia freaks claim that the last really great player was John Coltrane, who died in 1967, and who paved the way for jazz's second revolution after bop, namely free jazz.

But jazz-lovers as a whole can still enjoy the music of five great living saxophonists — Sonny Rollins, Ornette Coleman, Stan Getz, Lee Konitz and Dexter Gordon, who, in Bertrand Tavernier's "Autour de Minuit", typifies the saxophonists of the 50s, with their moving, husky style of playing.

Now that Gordon, Rollins and the others are all about 60, is there any chance of a third jazz revolution which will give the saxophone a new lease of life? The American idols of the younger generation (15- to 25-year-olds) are David Sanborn and above all Michael Brecker, whose tenor sax style has been described as "the most complete there is, a synthesis of almost all previous styles".

"Synthesis" is an apt word in this context, as the two jazz rock virtuosi just mentioned spend more time in the recording studio, surrounded by synthesisers, than on stage. But it is precisely that kind of electronic music which appeals to young people nowadays. If that is the way the jazz saxophone is doomed to go, we can say goodbye to the live improvisations and jam sessions that used to be such an essential feature of jazz.

(September 27)

No-holds-barred as the mullahs struggle for succession

AYATOLLAH MONTAZERI'S fall from favour (he has resigned from his post as Ayatollah Khomeini's heir-apparent) is a victory for the Tehran regime's second most powerful figure, Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani. The latter is in fact now looking increasingly like Khomeini's de facto successor.

The slow but relentless worsening of Imam Khomeini's health has reactivated the behind-the-scenes scramble for the succession that began this summer in Tehran. Ayatollah Montazeri, who in July was solemnly confirmed by the Assembly of Experts as the future Guide of the Revolution, yielded under pressure from a campaign orchestrated by the regime's apparatchiks and quit in mid-October. These men stepped up their campaign to prevent the accession — in the event of the Imam's sudden death, as those close to him feel is on the cards — of a man they consider to be an outsider to the political circles that have been monopolising most of the power in Tehran.

Imam Khomeini has still not accepted Montazeri's resignation, but it is certain the latter's prestige and credibility, questioned by a substantial body of Muslim clerics, have been seriously undermined.

It is highly improbable that Montazeri will one day be able to swing the situation in his favour. Oddly enough, the first blow was struck at Montazeri by one of his friends, Ayatollah Meshkini, the chairman of the Assembly of Experts who in July added the crowning touch to the heir-apparent's triumph. Towards the end of the summer Meshkini, whose son-in-law is the dreaded Minister of Intelligence Hojatoleslam Reyshari, began launching a campaign against Montazeri by declaring that a strong body of opinion in the country favoured the formation of a supervisory council made up of three or five religious figures in case Khomeini died.

Questioned on the subject by religious leaders from Qom, Imam Khomeini's machiavellian son, Ahmed Khomeini, immediately hinted his father did not approve of Ayatollah Montazeri's nomination as his sole successor, and was inclined to opt for the collegial formula provided for in the constitution.

About the same time — towards the end of September — the Iranian radio censored some of Ayatollah Montazeri's political pronouncements and the Imam's office, run by his son Ahmed, once again began publishing *fatwas* (religious notices), a prerogative which for almost a year belonged to Ayatollah Montazeri in his capacity as the successor-designate. Montazeri immediately showed his displeasure by leaving his Qom residence and going to "sulk" in his home town of Najafabad.

The real driving force behind the campaign to stop Montazeri in his rise to the top appears to be in fact the Hojatoleslam Rafsanjani, the all-powerful and ambitious speaker of the Majlis, who is at the same time Khomeini's representative in the Higher Defence Council.

By Jean Gueyras

Lacking (because of his relative youth) any of the religious qualifications that could catapult him to the top of the Iranian regime on Khomeini's death, he has for some time now been advocating the adoption of a supervisory council formula where he could continue to play a decisive role in Iranian politics aided by other religious figures opposed to a government led by Ayatollah Montazeri.

Moreover, Rafsanjani is increasingly looking like the Islamic regime's No 2 man and Imam Khomeini's de facto successor. He has a substantial say in the country's internal affairs as well as in the conduct of the war, which until recently was under the exclusive authority of the Imam himself. This is how the Majlis speaker recently persuaded the Higher Defence Council to postpone more or less for good the "new imminent and definitive offensive" Tehran has been threatening so frequently.

Rafsanjani still favours nationwide mobilisation and an all-out war against the Ba'ath regime, but the new strategy he is advocating is basically aimed at getting Iraq's regional and international allies to withhold the support they are giving President Saddam Hussein. With this in view, Rafsanjani has been making increasingly reassuring statements, pointing out in particular that, in the event of Saddam Hussein's fall, Iran would not jeopardise Iraq's unity and integrity and would be prepared to negotiate with the new Baghdad government "even if it were pro-American." He has also let it be understood that Iran is ready to relinquish all its previous intentions of imposing an Islamic regime on Iraq, and that Tehran would guarantee the security and integrity of all the Gulf states, thereby playing down the sacrosanct Islamic principle of exporting the revolution to the Gulf states.

Rafsanjani's postures were immediately branded as "defeatist" by hardline circles in Tehran who protested it was "treachery". The most determined detractor of the new military strategy is the Islamic Liberation Movement (ILM) which is responsible for the corps of *pasdarans* (Revolutionary Guards) in the "Islamic revolution's international brigades". The ILM is headed by Sayed Mehdi Hashemi, brother of Ayatollah Montazeri's son-in-law.

Sayed Mehdi Hashemi is a highly controversial figure who was sentenced to life imprisonment under the Shah for having strangled with his bare hands in 1973 an Isfahan religious figure, Ayatollah Shamsabadi, who was then Montazeri's chief rival. Some Tehran religious figures say that Hashemi has since been involved in several other terrorist actions against Montazeri's real or presumed enemies.

Like most of the other ILM leaders, Hashemi used to be on very good terms with Libya and was the first to object to Rafsanjani's strategy on the grounds that it was "selling the revolution down the river", that it "left Islamic liberation movements to their own devices" and "guaranteed the victory of Syria" which, he says, was entrusted with making sure that the Majlis speaker's new plan was applied internationally. It has now been established that it was Hashemi's men who on October 3 kidnapped Ayat Mahmud, the Syrian chargé d'affaires in Tehran, and roughed him up "to teach him a lesson" and "teach him not to meddle in Iran's internal affairs". Ayat was accused by his kidnappers of meddling in the succession and plotting against Montazeri.



Drawing by Plantu

The kidnapping of Ayat, who was released only following strong and rapid intervention by Ahmed Khomeini, marked the moment that the fortunes of Ayatollah Montazeri and his supporters began to wane. Only a few days after the Syrian diplomat's release, Hojatoleslam Reyshari ordered Hashemi's arrest. Tons of compromising papers, including hundreds of counterfeit identity and travel documents, were seized at the ILM headquarters. Next day it was the turn of Mehdi Hashemi's brother, Hadi, to be picked up.

Ayatollah Montazeri appeared to be personally in the firing line as Mehdi Hashemi is his son-in-law, his chief personal secretary and handyman. The Imam's heir-apparent quit his Najafabad refuge and rushed to Jemaran where he was received by Imam Khomeini in the presence of the President of the Islamic Republic, Ali Khameinei, and his Prime Minister, Mir Musavi. There he put up a spirited defence of his relatives, complaining he was the victim of a plot and then resigned as heir-apparent.

Imam Khomeini, while insisting he was opposed to people being a law unto themselves — which seemed to indicate he agreed with the arguments of Ayatollah Montazeri's opponents — nevertheless asked Ali Khamanei and Mir Musavi to settle the matter amicably. He nevertheless declared that in the final analysis it was up to the Assembly of Experts to decide whether it accepted or rejected Montazeri's resignation. Since then the two Hashemi brothers have been freed on bail, but scores of people who worked with them are still in gaol and the ILM offices remain closed.

Apart from the changing fortunes in this never-ending war of succession, this serious internal crisis concerns the future of the Islamic Liberation Movement and the methods of exporting the Islamic revolution to Lebanon, Afghanistan and elsewhere. So far Ayatollah Montazeri has succeeded in keeping exclusive control of this. The Foreign Ministry has always demanded that the ILM be placed under its supervision. A similar demand has been made by the Ministry of Intelligence. The question who controls the ILM in the future will determine to a large extent Iran's behaviour in the world community.

(October 25)

Behind the barricades in Lebanon

Continued from page 12

vast majority of the inhabitants reject it because it is too closely linked to Iran and because they feel they will again be sacrificed. In addition, the young Hezbollah sheikhs' thirst for power and dominance is irritating to local traditional religious notables who see their authority being eroded. The inauguration at Siddikine, 15 kilometres east of Sidon, of a *haousa* (the name given to religious schools in Iran but until now not used in Lebanon) to turn out sheikhs in 10 to 20 months in contrast to the traditional procedure has not gone down well. A public demonstration, in which women took part, prevented the opening of a Koranic school at Jouaya. But how long can this resistance go on?

Other villages are completely dominated by the Hezbollahs who lay down "their law". Two young people caught together at Deir-Tobba were exhibited before the entire population of the village who assembled in the main square; the couple were whipped until they bled, then taken to the *husseynich* (Sh'ite meeting house) and married. Unlike in Beirut, Koranic law now regulates life in the whole of south Lebanon with Friday as the day of rest and alcohol banned much to the displeasure of many inhabitants. With leftwing militiamen being hunted down jointly by the Hezbollahs and Amal, any political expression other than that of these two militias is now forbidden. And they are militias which are practically interchangeable at the grassroots level.

Daoud Daoud, the Tyre region Amal boss whose relations with Nabih Berri in Beirut are distant, is mainly concerned with imposing his authority over the region. And this depends both on his ability to stand up to the Hezbollahs and on an unacknowledged modus vivendi with the Israelis. Amal officials argue that only the application of UN Resolution 425 calling for Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon can save the situation in South Lebanon by cutting the ground from under the feet of the Hezbollahs, the Palestinians' allies in the struggle against Israel. Though they have not rebuilt the military presence they had before 1982 (when Israel invaded Lebanon), the Palestinians are once again a force to be reckoned with in South Lebanon and they take part in anti-Israeli operations with the Hezbollahs.

This alliance worries Amal and some of their officials are not afraid to declare that their chief enemies today are the Palestinians, not the Israelis. The recent Amal attacks on the Rashidieh Palestinian camp near Tyre, which flared up violently after an armed truce lasting ten days, are interpreted in Palestinian circles as an attempt by the Amal, first, to rally its troops against a target that mobilises action (hatred of the Palestinians still runs very deep among South Lebanon's Shi'ite population) and, secondly, to demonstrate to the Israelis at a time when they are stepping up their support for the SLA that Amal can prevent the PLO from making a military comeback. This comeback is particularly significant in Sidon, which has once again become a city of Arafat's followers. Responsibility for maintaining security in South Lebanon, say Amal spokesmen in effect, falls exclusively on Amal and the Palestinians should agree to give up their arms.

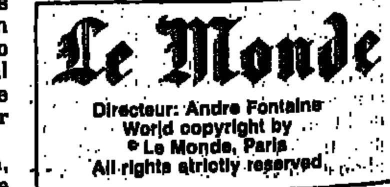
This is something which is rejected by all Palestinian organisations whatever their affiliations (and including the National Salvation Front, which is Syria's staunch ally). They are reforging their unity in their combats with the Amal Shi'ite militia.

Given such a state of affairs, a war between Shia clans cannot be entirely ruled out in South Lebanon, and inevitably this would take on the character of a surrogate Syrian-Iranian confrontation, with Syria backing Amal and Iran the Hezbollahs.

So the only interest in keeping Unifil is that it puts the situation in a state of suspended animation while the belligerents gird for battle. Discussions about possible participation of the Lebanese army alongside Unifil in maintaining security in the south are not taken very seriously in responsible quarters in Beirut. What army, people ask, and what will their instructions be? Without a national consensus on the south's future, what could the Lebanese army do sandwiched as it is between militias with different aims? The main thing, it is said, is to try to hammer out a Lebanese national or regional agreement before Unifil's mandate comes up for renewal on January 19 next year.

If not, once Unifil is withdrawn, South Lebanon is bound to become a shambles. The scenario thought likely by most people does not foresee a new Israeli occupation of the area, but ad-hoc strikes by the Israeli army which would result in once again forcing the inhabitants to flee to Beirut and its suburbs and turning South Lebanon into a scorched-earth region. A region on which Iran is endeavouring to impose its law to influence the Middle East conflict and its principal actors. Worried by this trend, Damascus can only react through its Amal allies. But is is hard to see how Syria could directly bring the Hezbollahs to heel while Israel is still occupying South Lebanon. "Get rid of Israel, and we'll settle the Hezbollah problem," chorus Lebanese leaders. But it is clear Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir does not see things in this way.

(October 25)



The Washington Post

American Hostage Freed After Secret Negotiations

By Nora Boustany

BEIRUT — An American hostage, Mr. David Jacobsen, was released here on Sunday after 17 months in captivity, amid indications that the Islamic Jihad terrorist organization may be ready to free the other two Americans it is holding.

In releasing Mr. Jacobsen, Islamic Jihad called on the United States to take unspecified moves that it said could lead "to a solution of the hostage problem," and Anglican Church envoy Terry Waite said he hoped for the release of more hostages soon.

Mr. Jacobsen, who was administrator of the hospital at the American University of Beirut, was reported to be in good health at the U.S. Embassy in suburban east Beirut. He was later flown to Cyprus and then to the U.S. military hospital in Wiesbaden, West Germany, for a medical examination.

The release of Mr. Jacobsen, who was abducted from a street in Moslem west Beirut on May 28, 1985, left six Americans captive or unaccounted for in Lebanon, two of them known to be in the hands of Islamic Jihad, which had released two other American captives earlier.

"I hope with support of our friends we should be able to see the release of remaining hostages, U.S. hostages and others, in the next days," said Mr. Waite, a lay representative of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Robert Runcie. Mr. Waite, who has frequently acted as an intermediary on the issue of the western hostages, had surfaced here Friday but gave no details of his activities.

Security guards at the site of a vacant, former U.S. Embassy building in west Beirut said Mr. Jacobsen arrived there on foot about 7 a.m., after walking from a seafront hotel where his captors had dropped him off. A heavily armed U.S. motorcade took him across the Green Line separating the Moslem and Christian sections of the capital, to the new American diplomatic mission in east Beirut.

The pro-Iranian Islamic Jihad, or holy war, organization, in a message delivered to an international news agency on Sunday afternoon and addressed to "world public opinion, the American people and the families of the hostages," warned: "We hold the American government fully responsible for the consequences of any failure to take advantage of this opportunity and proceed with current approaches that could lead, if continued, to a solution of the hostages' issue.

"We alert the American government, the families of the hostages and the American people that we shall take a totally different attitude in case the American government fails to complete these approaches to arrive at the hoped-for results."

This was the first indication by the clandestine group that it considers that some kind of bargaining is underway between it and Washington.

On Saturday, the Lebanese Justice Minister, Mr. Nabih Berri, who also heads the Shiite Moslem Amal movement, told French television that "contacts related to the fate of hostages detained in Lebanon" were "currently underway between the United States and Kuwait."

Islamic Jihad, believed to be an umbrella cover organization of Middle East intelligence services and Tehran-linked Shiite fundamentalists, offered last year and again this summer to swap American and French captives it holds for Lebanese and Iraqi Shiite activists jailed in Kuwait after being convicted of taking part in a series of bombings there in 1983.

The moves that cleared the way for Sunday's release were not clear but the sudden breakthrough after months of stagnation with the arrival of Mr. Waite in Beirut signaled that negotiators had


Mr Terry Waite

adopted a new approach.

Syria's role in the recent developments has remained ambiguous. Despite heavy hints to Syria by western governments that the time was right for it to use its influence with extremist groups in Lebanon to secure a hostage release, there has been no evidence that it has done so.

When the Rev. Lawrence Jenco, the director here of Catholic Relief Services, was freed last July 27 after 18 months of captivity, he surfaced in a Syrian-controlled area in central Lebanon and was then taken to Damascus and released. Mr. Jacobsen's hushed-up removal to east Beirut left Syria deprived of the acclaim and press attention it has received at the conclusion of previous hostage dramas in Lebanon.

Diplomatic sources in Damascus told Reuter that Syria had no direct role in Jacobsen's release but was advised of developments. "Washington has used Waite only to deprive Syria of its reputation as a peace broker," one Damascus source said.

Mr. Jacobsen, from Huntington Beach, Cal., has made a number of videotaped appeals to the U.S. government and the American people, calling for action to end the captivity of the hostages.

At least two more Americans are still held by Islamic Jihad: Terry Anderson, the bureau chief here for The Associated Press, who was kidnaped in March 1985, and Thomas Sutherland, dean of the school of agricultural engineering at the American University of Beirut, held since June 1985. Islamic Jihad said a year ago that it had killed U.S. diplomat William Buckley, but his body has never been found.

Three other missing Americans are believed to be held captive by other terrorist groups. They are Frank Herbert Reed, director of the Lebanese International School; Joseph James Cicippio, acting controller at the American University; and Edward Austin Tracy, a writer.

Mr. Jacobsen is the fifth American hostage to be freed in Lebanon. Since January 1984, 65 foreigners have been abducted here. Of those, 32 have been released, six were killed, four escaped and one was rescued.

France welcomed the release of Mr. Jacobsen amid hopes that nine French nationals held captive here will be allowed to return home. Others missing or kidnaped include two Britons, an Italian, an Irishman and a South Korean.

'Various Parties' Involved

By David B. Ottaway and Lou Cannon

WASHINGTON — President Reagan said on Sunday that American hostage David Jacobsen had been freed in Beirut because of U.S. efforts undertaken "through a number of sensitive channels for a very long time". White House spokesman Larry Speakes, issuing the presidential statement at Santa Barbara, paid tribute to hostage negotiator Terry Waite but said that other "various parties and intermediaries" had played a role.

White House chief of staff Donald T. Regan said he could not talk about how Jacobsen's release had been arranged "because we are still negotiating for the other hostages". He said, "negotiations" had been under way "over the past several months" with those holding the American hostages in Beirut.

Regan repeatedly used the word "negotiation", but said the administration had not changed its policy of refusing to yield to the kidnappers' demands. Other U.S. officials went out of their way to avoid suggesting that the administration was involved in any kind of negotiations.

Speakes declined to say whether Syria or other nations had been involved. Regan said, however, that the Syrian role had been "a minimal one". Arab diplomatic sources said they believe Iran had been "an important factor" in the decision to free Jacobsen. They noted that the Iranian foreign minister, Ali Akbar Velayati, visited Damascus at the weekend for talks with Syrian President Hafez Assad about Lebanon. A White House official, informed of the Arab diplomatic sources' comments, confirmed the Iranian role.

Campus Siege Sets Back Korean Hopes

By John Burgess

EFFORTS by the South Korean ruling and opposition parties to make peace and establish a new form of government are again deadlocked, after a rise in protests by student radicals — notably a three-day siege at a Seoul campus that ended last week with the arrest of 1,185 people.

Both sides consider changing the Constitution a key to long-term political stability in South Korea, yet an agreement is far away, most analysts say. Pressure to find one is strong, partly because the 1988 summer Olympics, which are to be held in Seoul, are seen as a deadline.

President Chun Doo Hwan agreed earlier this year to negotiate a change, after large demonstrations by the opposition New Korea Democratic Party, students, and Christian groups.

His unusual concession raised optimism for an end or reduction to the confrontations which characterise politics here. Yet after agreeing to talk, the two sides put forward incompatible plans, the essential points of which they say are non-negotiable.

The New Korea Democratic Party wants to scrap indirect presidential elections which would assure that their candidate would win, it says. Mr Chun's Democratic Justice Party, however, insists that South Korea needs a diffusion of power through a cabinet system of government, headed by a prime minister elected by the National Assembly.

In Bonn, the dissident leader, Kim Youn-Sam, blamed a lack of democratic reform for the campus unrest and said he feared more violent protests unless there was change from the government.

Mr Kim, who controls the New Korea Democratic Party with fellow dissident Mr Kim-Dae-Jung, said at the weekend that he believed a sense of hopelessness was pushing the students towards violence.

"The basic and main call of the students is for democracy but . . . it has been suppressed so hard by brutal police action that some have become radicals," Mr Kim said.

Mr Kim, a former presidential contender, arrived in Bonn on Saturday for a one-week visit to West Germany.

Some analysts meanwhile think that the Government in Seoul may make the law dealing with election to the National Assembly more palatable to the Opposition, which claims that the current system favours the Government. The Government may also exploit the fact that some opposition members once espoused cabinet rule. "At heart, they want to see it," said Mr Lee Jong Ryool, a presidential spokesman.

The Government could do a deal with the moderate opposition Korea National Party and perhaps a few New Korea Democratic Party defectors to get sufficient votes.

If that happens, the New Korea Democratic Party is expected to go back to the streets. "I don't think they would be able to maintain power even for six months," said Kim Young-Sam, predicting a severe public backlash.

Relations with the ruling party have also been strained by the arrest in September of an opposition legislator, Mr Yoo Sung Hwan, for questioning South Korea's fundamental policy of anti-Communism.

Opposition lawmakers barred access to the Speaker's platform to block a vote clearing the way for Yoo's arrest. The Government brought 1,000 policemen into the assembly building while ruling party members voted, and opposition politicians sprayed the police with a fire hose.

The Opposition later dropped its defence of Mr Yoo, who was castigated privately by some party members for complicating the struggle with the Government.

The Washington Post

French Cave-in

A NEW place, a dismal place, seems to have been reached in the West's struggle against terrorism. Governments have reacted questionably in the past but perhaps never quite so shamefully as France in its attempt to end the street bombings that took 10 lives in Paris a few weeks ago. Press reports with varying degrees of official confirmation suggest that, to ensure the bombings would not resume, the conservative government of Jacques Chirac made certain offers or initiatives involving 1) arms deals or financial deals with Syria and possibly also with Iran, and 2) expectations of leniency to the Lebanese militant, Georges Abdallah, who awaits trial in Paris for complicity in the murders of Israeli and American diplomats and whose family is widely held responsible for the Paris bombings.

By a devastating coincidence, news of the Chirac cave-in spread just as the British were breaking relations with Syria after a British court convicted a Syrian agent of trying to blow up an El Al airliner with 375 people aboard. So while London was forthrightly condemning Damascus and asking its fellow Europeans to make common cause, Paris was expressing sympathy for the Syrian leadership's "distress" at being linked to terrorism and praising Syria's willingness "to help us." We do not recall a keener example of cravenness, infidelity to a friend and disloyalty to the struggle against what presumably everyone regarded as a mutual menace.

Of the explanations offered for French behavior, one has a special ring. It is suggested that France is trying not merely to protect its citizens — a requirement for all democratic governments — but also to conduct a traditional Middle East policy of dimensions it can no longer afford or carry off. There is something in this criticism of French striving for grandeur, although we would not take it so far as to say the French have no business conducting any Middle East policy: in Lebanon, where the United States faded out, France stays and makes a contribution of service to American interests.

In any event, Europe's foreign ministers meet again on terrorism on Nov.10. The French will be under the heavy extra pressure generated by the latest disclosures about their policy. Good. Syria acted criminally. The French are right to consider the safety of their streets, their hostages taken in Lebanon and their peace-keeping forces stationed in Lebanon. But no one asks them to declare war. Self-respect surely makes a claim on French policy, and so does solidarity with allies. There should be no doubt whether France stands with the victims of terrorism or with its perpetrators.

The Gulf After Yamani

OPEC'S latest meeting, unusually quarrelsome and protracted, raises a puzzling question about the current politics of oil prices. The mystery is now deepened by King Fahd's decision to fire the Saudi oil minister of the past 24 years, Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani.

Earlier this year the war at the north end of the Persian Gulf went well for Iran. In response, at OPEC's previous meeting in August, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the other Arab oil-producing states along the western shore of the Gulf seemed to be offering Iran concessions on oil policy and making their peace with the Iranians.

But at last month's OPEC meeting, Kuwait reversed itself. It went out of its way to bait Iran and to demand a larger production quota. That was an extraordinary display of defiance, not to say bravado, by a small and vulnerable country within a few miles of the present fighting between Iran and Iraq. The question is nicely put by Mel Conant, editor of the newsletter Geopolitics of Energy: was it wrong to think in August that the Gulf Arabs were making serious concessions to Iran? Or has something happened since then to change the balance of forces in the Persian Gulf?

In OPEC's politics, the deepest split has always been between the Gulf Arabs and the radical states led by Iran. The Gulf Arabs, deeply conservative and vastly rich, have always been inclined to keep the price of oil relatively low to encourage the world to use huge volumes of it. The radicals have always wanted the highest prices possible, and they have repeatedly demanded that the Gulf Arabs cut back production to force prices up.

If Iran were to win its long war with Iraq, it would emerge as the leading military power in the Gulf region. The Saudis and the Kuwaitis appeared to be anticipating that possibility in August when they accepted oil production quotas that were designed to raise and then to stabilize oil prices. Has anything happened in the past three months to change their calculations of their future? The Iraqis have greatly expanded their air attacks on Iran's oil terminals, reducing Iran's exports to half the level of midsummer. But that hardly seems conclusive in a war that, like most, will be won or lost on the ground. Perhaps something else has happened, not yet visible here. Or perhaps the Kuwaitis were deliberately taking large risks.

In one respect, at least, the results of the meeting were adequate from Iran's point of view. Iran wanted an agreement on continued production limits, and it got that agreement — although it's a shaky agreement at best, good for a mere two months, with everything to be renegotiated in December. The divisions in OPEC remain as deep as ever.

And what about Sheikh Yamani? His speech at Harvard in September cannot have pleased the Iranians much. There he firmly defended Saudi Arabia's longstanding policy: stability and predictability in oil pricing, leading to slow but steady increases in world consumption, which in turn would allow a slow upward trend in prices to the end of the century — nothing to hurt oil markets in the industrial countries.

Possibly his dismissal is a concession to Iran. Or possibly it's a concession to some of the greedier figures in the huge royal family, who want more money and want it faster than the cagey Sheikh Yamani thought prudent. That would mean higher Saudi production and lower world prices, sharpening the conflict with Iran. At present only one thing is clear, but that one thing is crucial: the Iran-Iraq war has now become the dominant influence on OPEC and on the price of the world's most important industrial commodity.

The Twilight Of Empire

By Jim Hoagland

PARIS — Acknowledged, power lost can free a nation to act as it should. Denied, it can entangle and lure societies that should know better into dangerous traps.

By confronting Syria with the evidence of official Syrian involvement in the attempt to blow up an El Al airliner after it had left London, Britain has chosen to transform its lack of power in today's Middle East into freedom of action. Prime Minister Thatcher has realistically concluded that Britain would have lost more by continuing to do business as usual with Damascus than by breaking relations.

France has taken the other path, clinging to the myth that its "special role" can decisively influence a region wracked by war and chaos. The main result has been to make French policy as well as French nationals hostage to forces beyond the control of the hybrid Paris government of Socialists and neo-Gaullists.

In the twilight of empire, Britain and France have staged their separate retreats from Asia, Africa and the Middle East with varying degrees of success, but with constant attention to protecting their national interests in those regions. Their sharp differences over Syria reach far beyond differences of tactics on terrorism.

Predictably, the Foreign Office sought to persuade Thatcher that breaking relations with Damascus would keep Britain out of the Middle East peace process, and would limit British influence over Syria on other matters, including terrorism. But the prime minister decisively rejected the idea of continuing to pay lip service to a peace process that has reached a dead end.

In France, Prime Minister Jacques Chirac has found himself stuck to the Middle East as if to tar paper since his conservative coalition wrested control of the National Assembly away from the Socialists on March 16. By making the release of French hostages held in Lebanon a high and visible priority upon taking office, Chirac sought to score an early success where Socialist President Francois Mitterrand had failed. But by engaging his own prestige in that effort, Chirac repeated the kind of tactical errors that Jimmy Carter made toward Iran. Chirac has been toyed with by the Syrians and Iranians as Carter was, and his tactics have emboldened other terrorist groups to make new demands on France.

Moreover, Chirac has given the radical forces of the Middle East an ever expanding target by pretending that the kind of hard choice that Thatcher has just made can be indefinitely avoided.

Because of France's special ties to the region, the government's spokesmen argue, they can continue to arm Iraq, improve relations with Iran, remain present in Lebanon, help bolster an increasingly shaky regime in Syria, be tough on terrorists at home and be a privileged interlocutor with Egypt on peace efforts, all at the same time.

Thus, only hours after Britain's Geoffrey Howe had provided his European colleagues with a detailed dossier showing Syrian intelligence services to be at the heart of the failed El Al bombing attempt, Chirac's interior minister, Charles Pasqua, was being quoted by a Saudi Arabian newspaper as praising the "real cooperation" that Syrian secret services were giving France in preventing a renewal of the wave of bombings that brought terror to the streets of Paris in September.

With criticism growing here and abroad of Chirac's lack of firmness, the government leaked word that it had reached agreement with Iran on a financial dispute, which could lead to Iranian help for freeing the French hostages in Lebanon. And it did not rush to deny a plausible report in Le Monde that France, through Syria, had reached a truce with the Arab group accused of conducting the September bombings. Syria, by no coincidence, hopes to gain new arms sales and financial help from France. By leaving it hanging before issuing a half-denial, the government seemed to suggest that its policy of accommodation was buying relief from bombing.

This confusion in French policy toward the Middle East is no cause for rejoicing by anyone. A strong and clearly defined French role in the Middle East is in the interests of that region, of Europe and of the United States. Indeed, the Reagan administration in particular has no cause to feel superior. It has shown its own ambivalence about making tough choices when it comes to Damascus, and the incoherent way in which it committed U.S. forces and then pulled them out of Lebanon as Ronald Reagan eyed re-election in 1984 helped push France toward this quagmire.

Boost For Soviet Hardliners

By Gary Lee

MOSCOW — President Reagan's rejection of the Kremlin's arms proposals in Reykjavik hit Moscow like a break in a dam, unleashing a rush of public doubts here about the possibilities of reaching an arms control agreement with Reagan at all. Three weeks after the summit, this skeptical assessment appears to reflect new clout for Soviet hard-liners and doom sayers.

Soviet proponents of arms control, and of the Reykjavik package, still have an influential voice. Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is meeting with his American counterpart this week to follow up the Iceland summit. Communist Party leader Mikhail Gorbachev has gone on national television three times to say that he stands behind the proposals he made in Reykjavik.

But in laying bare the differences between the two sides over Reagan's space-based missile defense program, the Iceland summit has reinforced the arguments of those opposed to serious bargaining with Washington and eroded the position of nuclear disarmament advocates, including Gorbachev.

It has enhanced the profile of those supporters of greater investment in better Soviet military technology, such as former deputy defense minister Nikolai Ogarkov, and invigorated the public debate about shoring up Soviet security and protecting the nation against the threat it perceives in Reagan's space-based missile defense program, the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), or "Star Wars."

In its post-Reykjavik meeting, the ruling Politburo gave Gorbachev's second summit with Reagan a more cautious endorsement than it had given the first meeting in Geneva a year ago. Western Kremlinologists here said the unenthusiastic response to Reykjavik could signal a potential clash pitting the ruling body's hard-liners against Gorbachev and other proponents of arms control.

Since Reykjavik, Ogarkov, one of Moscow's leading proponents of beefing up Soviet military hardware, has emerged from obscurity and rebutted the argument of nuclear disarmers who contend that the flagging Soviet economy can scarcely afford increased military investments.

In an article released last week by the official information service Novosti, Ogarkov, ousted two years ago as deputy defense minister, said, "The Soviet military doctrine presupposes that the level the socialist economy's development has reached at present allows it to solve successfully the most complicated defense tasks and to create within a short period of time any type of weapon needed in the defense of the motherland."

Ogarkov's return to the public eye is seen by western diplomats as a possible resurgence of hardliners in Moscow who believe the Soviet Union needs to match the continuing U.S. military buildup to retain a convincing sense of parity in the confrontation with the United States.

For western analysts, the new Soviet doubts about the future of arms control are not surprising, since Gorbachev's public support for complete nuclear disarmament has always had a disingenuous ring.

For one thing, a policy of disarmament would require approval of the Politburo, with its strong contingent of members who ushered the Soviet Union through the massive stockpiling of strategic and intermediate-range weapons in the past two decades. These weapons have always been considered by the military a deterrent to other nuclear powers, such as China, as well as the United States.

For another, the Soviet Union's strategic arsenals are its basic — some would say sole — criterion as a superpower. The *abolition* of these weapons, as suggested at Reykjavik, would encounter stiff opposition from the military hierarchy and other Soviet strategists who count on nuclear firepower as an important element of Soviet stature in the world.

Western diplomats said the Politburo approved such far-reaching proposals in the first place only because its members felt certain that Reagan would reject any package involving restrictions on his cherished SDI program.

Since the summit, Gorbachev has pledged to push ahead with his arms package. With much of his international reputation staked on his arms proposals, the Soviet leader has gone before the public three times to say the failure of the summit was caused by Reagan's inflexibility and powerlessness to act, and not his own.

But western diplomats here said Gorbachev is making the case for pressing ahead with arms control as much to Soviet officials as to the public. According to a prominent Soviet journalist, Gorbachev was catering as much to the doom sayers as to the disarmament proponents in his three post-Reykjavik television broadcasts.

Even the Soviet public has been brought forward to represent the Soviet proponents of arms control. Last week, a Sovietskaya Rossiya reader asked in the official newspaper's letters column whether Gorbachev had been unnecessarily rigid in his opposition to Reagan's SDI proposal.

"Shouldn't we have just conceded on the question of SDI?" asked Maria Stefashinoi, a doctor from Kirov. "If we had just been able to sign some documents in Iceland, it would have improved our position, and not the other way around."

"Such questions would not be published," one senior western diplomat said, "if officials in the leadership had not raised them, too."

The Case For Doing Away With Ballistic Missiles

By Stansfield Turner

RONALD REAGAN'S proposal at Reykjavik to eliminate all U.S. and Soviet ballistic missiles is the most significant move in nuclear arms control in a generation. What the president was saying, and Mikhail Gorbachev was close to accepting, is that neither country aspires to a first-strike capability against the other.

A practical way to begin making Reagan's dream a reality is by banning all testing of ballistic missiles. Within 10 years, the missile forces of both sides would no longer be accurate or reliable enough for a first strike.

The leaders of both countries have said previously that they have no intention of striking first. But at Reykjavik, Reagan and Gorbachev considered actually pulling the teeth of their first-strike capabilities, the ballistic missiles. In theory only ballistic missiles can carry out a first, surprise attack because only they are fast enough — 30 minutes from launch to striking the target in the other's continent. Bombers and cruise missiles — which take six hours or so to reach their targets — allow the other side sufficient warning to counter-launch any vulnerable forces.

Talk of first strikes has an Alice-in-Wonderland quality. It assumes away the fact that even after an attack against land-based ballistic missiles, an arsenal of bombers, submarines and cruise missiles would survive and be able to retaliate devastatingly. This would make a first strike a foolish proposition, no matter how much surprise it achieved.

The survivability of our nuclear forces used to rest on the concept of a 'triad": ballistic missile based in fixed silos on land; ballistic missiles based in submarines; and bombers based on airfields. Even if we gave up the first two legs of the old triad, we would still have survivable nuclear forces. In addition to bombs on bombers and cruise missiles on bombers and submarines, we have added two new forms of basing: cruise missiles on mobile land-launchers and on surface ships.

We could then, I believe, maintain sufficient invulnerable forces even if we dropped all ballistic missiles. There are only two meaningful arguments for retaining ballistic missiles, other than survivability.

- One is that Soviet air defenses may improve to the point where our bombers and cruise missiles cannot assuredly penetrate Soviet air space. The Soviets have placed a lot more effort in air defense than we have, and the technologies for such defenses are improving every day. At the same time, though, Stealth techniques for hiding bombers and cruise missiles from radars are improving the chances of penetrating such defenses. Where the balance lies in ten years will determine whether we can safely proceed to zero ballistic missiles, as the president proposes. The chances are that both countries will want to retain a very few submarine- and land-based ballistic missiles — to retain a capability for delivering weapons in case atmospheric defenses become very good.
- The second reason usually advanced for keeping ballistic missiles is that they would provide a prompt retaliatory capability in the event of a partial nuclear attack by the Soviets, one in which they hit a few military targets in the United States and then called on us to capitulate, rather than bring on a possible Armageddon.

This scenario is highly improbable, but if we think it through, our best option would be to respond with a similar limited nuclear attack. The Soviets could then either absorb our counterattack and negotiate, or they could ratchet the warfare upward and likely out of control. That choice could determine the fate of mankind. We should prefer that the Soviet leadership have time to think it through.

Thus, it would be far preferable that our counterstrike be done with slow bombers or cruise missiles, rather than fast ballistic missiles. We would even phone the Soviets to tell them our slow strike was on the way and that, after thinking it over, they had best decide to absorb it and quit.

The fact that Gorbachev would agree to President Reagan's dream, or even discuss it, when Soviet nuclear forces are so much more dependent on the ballistic missile than ours, could indicate that he perceives the diminishing utility of this weapon.

In fact, there are signs that the Soviets are moving away from their heavy dependence on fixed land-based ballistic missiles. They have already developed two new land-mobile ballistic missiles and a new intercontinental bomber. Just a few weeks ago they talked for the first time about the Soviet strategic triad, perhaps indicating a new interest in bombers and cruise missiles. It is likely, however, that Gorbachev will only reorient his nuclear forces if we kill the Strategic Defense Initiative or Star Wars.

But even without a grand compromise on SDI, Ronald Reagan could achieve a breakthrough simply by tabling what would be the most succinct arms-control agreement in history. The entire text would read: "The United States and the Soviet Union agree never again to test a ballistic missile."

Nothing more would be needed, since we can easily verify whether any testing of ballistic missiles takes place. The cessation of testing of both sides would amount to eschewing a first-strike capability, even without doing away with the weapons. In time the result of not testing would be that while the missiles would remain sufficiently reliable and accurate to maintain a general deterrent, they could not be considered accurate and reliable enough for a first, disabling strike against hardened silos.

Our European allies undoubtedly would be troubled by an American no-first-use declaration, since it would, in theory, reduce their confidence that there is a linkage between our nuclear weapons and the defense of Western Europe. Already the Europeans are crying that reductions in nuclear weapons, such as those discussed at Reykjavik, could leave NATO vulnerable to the superior conventional forces of the Warsaw Pact. This is an issue that badly needs airing because the defense which the Europeans believe they are receiving from our nuclear forces is only a mirage.

When, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, we had a monopoly on nuclear weapons, our assurance to Europe that our nuclear might compensated for NATO's inferiority in conventional arms was meaningful. Back then, we might well have attacked Moscow with nuclear weapons if Western Europe was being overrun. But once the Soviets had built a capability to retaliate against Washington with nuclear weapons, that assurance was no longer credible. It's not conceivable that any president would risk the very existence of our nation in order to defend our European allies from a conventional assault, especially when such an assault would most likely come about as a result of the Europeans' unwillingness to field sufficient conventional forces.

We and the Europeans have come to different, but distorted, views of the "nuclear umbrella" over Western Europe. As the Europeans see it, our defense of their territory would amount to a nuclear war between us and the Soviet Union with all the nuclear weapons flying over and outside of the umbrella. To Americans, our defense of Europe would be with tactical nuclear weapons based in Western Europe and fired at Eastern Europe — all inside that same nuclear umbrella. Somehow we both look at this war scenario with blinders that shield us from any thought that it would result in nuclear damage to our own soil.

The mirage that we and the Europeans insist on seeing is nothing but a device for justifying the unwillingness of both ourselves and the Europeans to spend enough on conventional forces. This is an issue that cannot be ignored much longer.

On the European side some socialist parties are proposing the removal of all nuclear weapons, but with no compensatory increase in conventional defenses. On the U.S. side, Americans are recognizing that one reason we are losing out economically to some of our allies is that we are paying almost seven percent of GNP for defense, whereas some of them are down to as low as one per cent. This imbalance is a crucial issue for our alliances with NATO, Japan and Korea. We should be glad that the idea of doing away with ballistic missiles has brought it to the fore.

What would a world free of superpower nuclear ballistic missiles be like? With the nuclear forces of both sides, limited to bombers and cruise missiles, neither side would have to worry that it might have to launch its nuclear forces pre-emptively because the other side had launched, or was about to launch, a first strike. Perhaps Stealth bombers and Stealth cruise missiles, which could not be detected until they were very close to their targets, might be capable of a surprise first strike. But at what? In a world without ballistic missiles, retaliatory forces in small packages like cruise missiles and bombers would be so spread around and concealed that it would be impossible to find and destroy them all.

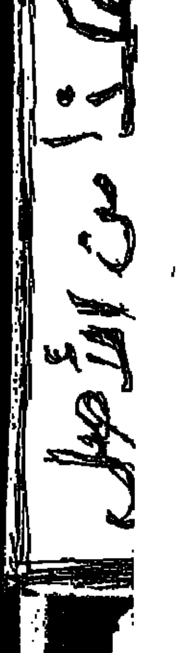
A world of only bombers and cruise missiles, though, would be one in which it would be difficult to control the number of weapons each side has. In this sense, it would play havoc with the bean-counting aspects of nuclear arms control.

Counting cruise missiles will be a problem whether we dispense with ballistic missiles or not, and it need not be a major concern. The objective of arms control agreements shouldn't be to control the numbers of nuclear weapons, after all, but to avoid either side's ever resorting to their use. Nothing will do that more than dispensing with all ballistic missiles. Neither side could think it might gain something important through a surprise attack. Nor would either side ever feel the pressure to launch its own weapons for fear they would be destroyed by an impending first strike.

The most important lesson of the last thirty years of living with a delicate balance of nuclear weapons is that no one has used them. The irrationality of any calculated nuclear attack has been apparent to both Soviet and American leaders. The danger we face is that rationality will be set aside some day in a moment of confused fear, probably based on misinformation. Without ballistic missiles, the pressures in such a situation are bound to be less and hence the risks less.

The president's intuition was brilliant in offering up our ballistic missile force. Moving the two superpowers away from weapons whose vulnerability make us sit with our finger on the trigger and whose first-strike potential forces the Soviets to do likewise can only be stabilizing. Having put this ball in play, the administration should be encouraged to run with it.

Stansfield Turner, a retired Navy admiral, was director of central intelligence during the Carter administration.



Stalin's Genocide Of The Soviet Peasantry

THE HARVEST OF SORROW: Soviet Collectivization and The Terror-Famine. By Robert Conquest. Oxford University Press. 412pp. $19.95.

By Dimitri K. Simes

TWENTY MILLION dead was the price of Soviet victory in the Second World War. The tragedy is eagerly advertised by the Soviet state. It is also exploited for political purposes. Domestically the regime uses this horrible sacrifice both to make the people proud of their country's historic contribution to the Nazi defeat and to remind them of the need to be vigilant, to tighten their belts in order to be prepared to face any "imperialist enemy" today. Abroad the Soviet public relations machine rarely misses an opportunity to portray the enormity of the war-time casualties as evidence to substantiate Moscow's current peaceful intentions.

And even if the Kremlin's propaganda overstates its case, few Westerners can escape respecting the tremendous heroism demonstrated by the Soviet population despite such great hardship. The respect, and even admiration, are appropriate. But to put them in proper perspective, one should remember that the battles of 1941-1945 were not the first disaster on such a scale to strike the country since the Bolshevik revolution in 1917.

In his meticulously researched new book, *Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine,* Robert Conquest presents a chilling account of Stalin's regime cold bloodedly killing 20 million of its own subjects; 14.5 million perished in the process of the collectivization and the subsequent famine. Millions were massacred in other purges launched in the course of the great terror. What the Communist government did to its people was genocide — pure and simple.

But the most frightening thing which emerges from the Conquest book is that there was no rationale for this crime. At least there was no rationale Westerners could comprehend. That is one reason, in addition to Soviet efforts to hide the truth, why the dimensions of the tragedy have been slow to penetrate the conscience of the West. Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *Gulag Archipelago* served as an eye-opener to many. But Solzhenitsyn's tendency to exaggerate, to overdramatize, to present rumors as established facts have severely undermined the credibility of his charges among American scholars.

Conquest does understand that the disaster he is describing speaks for itself. Moralizing about this Soviet-inflicted holocaust would be in bad taste. Instead, Conquest presents an abundance of evidence from Western, emigré and official Soviet sources to substantiate his case in admirable detail. He has succeeded in demonstrating, even to a skeptical reader, "that the figures we have given are conservative estimates, and quite certainly do not overstate the truth."

But why would even such a tyrant as Joseph Stalin slaughter many millions of Soviet peasants? According to Conquest, there were "two distinct, or partly distinct, elements: the Party's struggle with the peasantry, and the Party's struggle with Ukrainian national feeling." The struggle against the peasantry had two connected components — dekulakization and collectivization.

Starting in the late '20s, the leadership increasingly began to see prosperous peasants — so called kulaks — as a class enemy to be eliminated. And since Stalin was destroying his political rivals, the theory has gradually emerged that the Soviet state could not survive without a speedy industrialization at all costs. The peasantry was supposed to subsidize the industrialization, and a full-scale collectivization became the preferred instrument.

The collectivization was based on the arrest and deportation of well-to-do (and often not-so-well-to-do) peasants and the expropriation of the peasants' property up to the last bushel of seed grain. The peasants lost both the incentive and the capability to produce a sufficient harvest. The famine was bound to follow.

Starvation was particularly brutal in the Ukraine where, in addition to the campaign against kulaks, a war was declared against all vestiges of local nationalism. Ukrainian peasants were viewed as a major constituency for "petty-bourgeois" nationalist sentiment. To them the sword of the revolution knew no mercy. The authorities had gone so far as to prevent starving Ukrainian peasants from escaping to the better supplied Russian provinces and bringing food from Russia back to their dying villages. Conquest calculates that "of a Ukrainian farm population of between twenty and twenty-five million, about five million died — a quarter to a fifth." Travelers to the Ukraine reported unattended corpses of peasants who failed to escape filling local railroad stations.

Not everything was a result of careful calculation. Many decisions were made without sufficient information. Nobody defined with any degree of precision what exactly "kulaks" were. Nobody made sure that newly organized collective farms would be supplied with the necessary equipment, particularly tractors. And it was tractors that were portrayed as the reason why small peasants plots had to be quickly replaced by huge collective farms.

The regime was certainly in no danger from either the kulaks or the Ukranian nationalists. Until 1928 kulaks peacefully coexisted with the authorities. Many of them were former Red Army soldiers fully dedicated to the Communist system. And with the exception of a few politically irrelevant extremists, Ukrainian nationalists were perfectly prepared to remain an integral part of the Soviet Union and to be satisfied with some minimal respect for Ukrainian culture and tradition.

Why was it then necessary to subject the Soviet people to all this agony? Conquest sees the explanation in the Bolshevik traditional distrust of the peasantry and of any kind of national sentiment, especially in the Ukraine, due to its size and importance to the Russians. But there was another more fundamental cause as well. Stalin and his associates were obsessed with building the machinery of totalitarian control, the machinery which was prepared to tolerate neither the economic power of kulaks nor the ethnic peculiarity and pride of the Ukrainians. Both had to be broken at all costs.

Stalin had largely accomplished his objectives of ruthless modernization, which in the course of literally one decade managed to turn the Soviet Union into a major industrial power. While the collectivization had inflicted tremendous damage to Soviet agriculture, new terroristic control mechanisms allowed the state to more than double the amount of grain supplied to the government. Mikhail S. Gorbachev has indicated some tentative interest in adding an element of market economy to Soviet state-controlled agriculture. But meanwhile, although "excesses" of the collectivization were officially repudiated, as Conquest reminds us, "the system then established in the countryside is part of the Soviet order as it exists today." And Gorbachev and his associates still fail to tell their subjects that the suffering associated with its birth was comparable to the impact of the German invasion.

Dimitri K. Simes is a senior associate of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

How oats and wheat and barley grow

By Ralph Whitlock

WITH the help of a pocket calculator (arithmetic having never been my strong point) I have again been taking stock of the year's harvest.

In the early 1970s, when modern plant-breeding really began to get into full swing and to launch a fresh batch of new and allegedly improved varieties of cereal crops every year, I started to collect figures of actual yields, to see whether the claims made for them were justified. Most were, though some weren't.

It proved an interesting exercise, and one of some value to farmers mulling over which new variety to try, so I have been repeating it ever since. From farmers, merchants, official trials and other sources I collect something like 2,000 individual records annually.

Plant-breeding is now a large and highly sophisticated operation, involving first-class geneticists. To prove a promising new variety requires years of patient research and manipulation, in the course of which scores of thousands of plants are tested and rejected. Once the process gets going, however, it can be relied on to have a few new protégès ready for introduction each year, and as several competing or collaborating organisations are engaged in the work in most western countries the annual quota tends to be quite formidable.

In the farming to which I was apprenticed between the wars we stuck to the same familiar varieties year after year. *Squareheads Master* and *Red Standard* were the two standard wheats that I remember; and *Plumage-Archer* and *Spratt-Archer* were names I heard in connection with barley (spring barley, of course), though in general I think we simply swopped seed with our neighbours, regardless of variety.

The scientific approach to the breeding of cereal crops began apparently in the year 1820, when a Suffolk farm labourer, John Andrews, feeling uncomfortable after a day's work in the harvest field, took off his boots and found in one of them "a very fine ear of barley". He had the sagacity to sow the grains in his garden, where the crop was seen in the following year by a Dr Charles Chevallier, who was his landlord. The good doctor recognised the possibilities of this super-barley and asked that the harvest might be kept for him.

For the next few years he carefully cultivated and multiplied it until he had enough to grow on a field scale. The barley known as *Chevalier* (though I feel that the credit ought really to go to John Andrews), thereafter dominated the farming scene for the rest of the century — an achievement which no modern variety can or is likely to touch. Ten years seems to be about the maximum life of a variety now, and many new ones disappear after three or four years.

The impetus given to the development of new cereal varieties has been provided very largely by the successful introduction of winter barleys. From time immemorial, barley has been a crop for spring sowing. Much of the pioneer work in the breeding of winter varieties was done on the Continent, particularly in Germany, where Sir Joseph Nickerson found it in progress just after the war and came home fired with enthusiasm for it. It was his organisation which was responsible for producing new varieties of barley for autumn sowing and establishing them as standard British crops.

In consequence Britain changed from being a net importer of feeding barley to having a massive surplus of barley for export each year.

The doubt in farmers' minds when they were introduced to the new winter barleys was whether they would prove winter-hardy; and this, indeed, was one of the factors that prompted me to undertake my annual survey. As it happened, the claims of the plant-breeders have proved justified, and for some years past there has been little to choose between winter wheat and winter barley for yields.

Until this year.

All was well until in February we encountered a polar spell, characterised by bitter winds and temperatures which fell below zero Fahrenheit. When, after four or five weeks, soft south-westerlies began again to blow, nearly all winter crops appeared to be hardly worth saving, being as brown as autumn stubble. Rolling to consolidate the soil, timely applications of nitrogen and a taste of spring sunshine wrought miracles, and most crops recovered.

In general the 1986 harvest probably does not fall far short of the all-time record harvest of 1984. But it is now evident that winter wheat, with centuries of tradition and acclimatisation behind it, recovered better than the comparatively new winter barley.

My collected figures show this — 818 records of winter barley averaged 53.22 cwt per acre. Winter wheat, with nearly the same number of records, averaged 61.14 cwt per acre. That gives winter wheat an advantage of 8 cwt per acre. Until this year, farmers have considered the two crops interchangeable, sowing whichever happened to suit their convenience. But on this evidence, with virtually every other factor equal, the extra 8 cwt per acre obtainable from winter wheat would make a considerable difference to the net profit.

Another interesting fact emerges from my 1986 survey. The average for spring barley crops (though admittedly from a much smaller total number of records) was 53.23 cwt per acre — almost exactly as for winter barley.

Partly owing to a series of late springs, which have delayed sowing dangerously, farmers have tended to get as much barley as possible sown in autumn, leaving just the occasional field for spring barley. Now spring barley may come into its own again.

Winter oats, in times past the accepted alternative to winter wheat though never grown on the same scale, cannot now match the wheat crop in yields, but some disappointment was caused by the comparative failure of a new variety, *Bulwark*, which, from previous showings, seemed set to outyield the old varieties, *Pennal* and *Peniarth*. However, Arctic February proved too much for it. Several farmers have told me their crops were largely "wiped out".

The Turing test of freedom

THEATRE by Michael Billington

WE are used to modern plays that bombastically announce they are dealing with big issues. But the fascinating thing about Hugh Whitemore's Breaking The Code at the Haymarket is that it tackles major questions — such as the relationship between mathematics and personal morals — while telling a very good story. It is the work of a superb theatrical craftsman who knows how to keep an audience hooked while planting ideas like seeds.

Whitemore's hero, Alan Turing, was a mathematician and computer pioneer who broke the code in two ways. One was by cracking the German Enigma code at Bletchley Park during world war two. The other was by shattering the gentlemanly English code of sexual discretion and making little attempt to disguise his homosexuality. For the former he was lauded by Churchill and decorated by the state: for the latter he was in 1951, while a Reader in Mathematics at Manchester, arrested on a charge of gross indecency. Whitemore's play, shifting back and forth in time, constantly seeks to find a connection between the two events.

The easy way would be simply to see Turing as a victim of English Establishment hypocrisy. But at the heart of the play is Turing's excited discovery that in mathematics there is no inflexible rule for deciding what is right and wrong and that David Hilbert's axiomatic methods are flawed. If this is true for maths, then why not for morals? And so, at Bletchley and after, Turing sees no need to apologise for or conceal his sexual tastes.

Whitemore advances Turing's connection between science and morality less as a thesis than as a suggestion, but even so it leaves certain questions in the air. Such as whether Turing's open gayness didn't precede his questioning of mathematical axioms; and exactly why he blurted out to a Manchester cop, news of his affair with a local boy almost as if he wanted to be arrested.

But what makes it a good play is that it presents complex ideas in a highly theatrical form. Auden once said of Sherlock Holmes that he raised scientific curiosity to the status of an heroic passion. The same might be said of Whitemore's Turing (though due acknowledgment is given to Andrew Hodges's biography) who is obsessed by such questions as whether a machine can think, whether the mind can exist without the body and whether indeed God was a mathematician since in nature you find perfect forms.

Whitemore occasionally overlaps with other writers (notably David Hare whose Licking Hitler dealt with black propaganda at Bletchley). But what makes his play singular is that it conveys the sensory excitement of intellectual exploration.

It also creates one of the best, and most daunting, roles for an actor for some time. Not only is Turing never off stage. He also has to suggest by the merest gesture exactly which period of his life we are in. Derek Jacobi does all this — and more — with astonishing virtuosity. In a second he becomes the Sherborne schoolboy gazing at a friend with doe-eyed admiration; or the faintly arrogant Bletchley code-breaker with a Lawrentian sense of his own intellectual superiority; or the tentative middle-aged man breaking the news of his arrest to his mother; or the shy flirt who assumes the role of teacher to his lovers.

But what Jacobi brings out especially is the Peter Pan element in Turing's nature, with its yearning for a lost mother-love, combined with a bright-eyed excitement at the idea of a non-living brain. Jacobi conveys Turing's charm; but also his tragedy, which is that thought and feeling were never perfectly integrated.

Clifford Williams's production, set inside Liz de Costa's vast aircraft hangar filled with computerised machinery, has the great merit of pushing the story onwards so that the moral issues emerge almost obliquely. And the actors flesh out the attendant roles with particularly good work from Joanna David as a crypto-analyst devoted to Turing, from Michael Gough as his deeply English Bletchley boss advocating sexual restraint, and from Dave Hill as a dogged Manchester policeman.

One of the play's many ironies is that people are always telling Turing that they personally don't give a damn what his sexual preferences are. But, of course, they do. And one of the hidden themes in this fine and searching play — as in Pack Of Lies — is that when the morality of the state conflicts with that of the individual, it is the former that cruelly wins.

Cheap grain for Russia

By Rosemary Collins

UK grain merchants are tendering to sell up to a million tonnes of wheat and barley to Russia at subsidised rates of around £40 a tonne. British farmers are paying £100 a tonne for grain of comparable quality, which is used for feeding livestock. The difference in price is made up from Common Market funds.

The high level of subsidy currently being approved by the EEC, at around 75 per cent of the intervention price for wheat, reflects official eagerness to supply the Soviet market rather than leave it open to the United States.

The Ministry of Agriculture pointed out that if the UK did not sell grain to Russia, then the French would sell more, and failing that the United States would step in and take orders.

Owning your own place in Moscow

By Martin Walker

MY FRIEND Yuri owns his own apartment. A standard three-room Moscow flat, it is worth about 20,000 roubles these days. Only one in six Muscovites are so lucky.

When he bought it, about ten years ago, it was valued at R 12,000, and he had to put down the minimum deposit of one third of the value. He then borrowed the rest of the money from the state as a mortgage, which he repays over 20 years at an interest rate of 2 per cent.

His monthly payments are about R 45, compared to the 10-12 roubles he would pay in rent for a council flat. And in ten years' time, he will have a significant asset.

When he dies, his children can inherit the flat. If they do not want it, they can sell it. The only catch to all this is that the whole block of flats is a co-operative, and the rest of the co-op must approve any prospective purchaser who wants to buy in.

Like most foreigners, I was startled when I learned about the prevalence of home ownership in the Soviet state. But it makes a great deal of sense for the system. First, the payment of the deposits eases the state's own housing budget, and second, people buying their own co-ops are customers taken out of the long queue for public housing.

This co-op system of housing has had a chequered history. It began with Lenin's New Economic Policy after the civil war in 1921, when he licensed small-scale capitalism and commerce in an effort to rebuild a war-shattered economy. Stalin stopped it in the 1930s, and it was revived under Khrushchev as a component of his crash housing programme.

It has never worked quite as well as intended, and these days just over 10 per cent of new flats are built as co-ops. Every year Pravda runs a mournful piece saying the plan for co-ops has not been met again.

The reason for this is not a shortage of cash. There are 1.3 million families on the waiting list to buy a co-op flat, but fewer than 150,000 of them are built each year — which makes the co-op waiting list almost as long as the list for public housing.

The main reason for the delay is that the construction teams do not like to build for co-ops, who are more finicky customers, want better quality, and are much less ready than the state to sign the formal papers saying that the place has been received in good order.

This means that the builders risk losing their bonuses for completion on time. To solve this, a new regulation has been brought into force this year in 20 big cities, which says that instead of ordering their apartment block from scratch, co-ops can buy completed blocks in newly-built housing complexes.

In effect, it means the builders will not know whether their clients are public or private, and it will probably also mean that the co-op owners will have to take care of the finishing themselves.

The other problem is that these co-ops are hardly ever individual families who decide to club together to fund an apartment block. They need an official sponsor, and this is almost always their place of work, whether a ministry, a factory, a trading enterprise, or an academic institute.

Opposite my own home on Serpukhovsky Val is a co-op for local families, and my friend Yuri lives in a co-op sponsored by his research institute. In the quarter near the Pravda press complex, there are co-ops for journalists and print workers, and the union of artists has several co-ops.

These sponsoring organisations are supposed to fund the connection of "their" apartment blocks to city services like the sewers and water supplies, to pay for access roads, and the like. Since they are reluctant to pay the full price, and the city housing department will not pick up the tab, most co-ops either remain half-finished or force the members to club together to make up the difference.

But over the years, as co-op members die and their heirs sell, the once-coherent population of each of the blocks starts to change. They have less and less in common, no longer all work at the same place, and steadily become strangers to each other. Partly because of this, there is now talk of reviving the old 1920s co-op residential unions to give them more muscle when arguing with the city council over major repairs, bus routes, local shops, and services.

It is one of the many surprising ironies of the Soviet system that the only other places I know where this kind of co-op housing flourishes are in the capitalist bastions of New York and London, where, of course, they are known as condominiums and housing associations.

Glory of the show on the road

ALBERT HERRING on tour is a triumph, and Simon Boccanegra a vast improvement on the summer festival. So those punters who opted to wait for Glyndebourne Touring Opera can show a healthy artistic as well as financial profit. GTO has often challenged memories of starrier, but less committed and exuberant festival performances. It has never before routed the competition quit so conclusively.

The biggest asset of GTO's Albert Herring is, without doubt, Oliver Knussen's conducting, the first time he has taken charge of a full-length opera or, indeed, an opera not composed by himself. The result is simply extraordinary: Knussen shows an emotional maturity and a virtuoso confidence in interpretation that in this country only Simon Rattle, possibly, could excel.

For Knussen, of course, this is home. He adheres scrupulously to Britten's prescribed speeds, a terrific lick it must be said, but proves that, with lightness and clarity of texture and niftiness of expression, the dramatic articulation in Britten's opera is flawless.

Because Knussen proves such a perfect accompanist, he is able to get all the many supporting parts to sing their hearts out. Thus he guarantees authenticity right through, not just in the rich, sexy duets of Sid and Nancy, or in the eruptions of Albert Herring himself. Instead of seeming arch and remote, Britten's opera is presented by Knussen as a work of credible comedy and persuasive musical ingenuity.

The staging has lost some of its picture-book naturalism — the John Gunter street set cannot tour — but Christopher Newell's excellent restaging exploits the extra lightness and space around the performers to achieve a stronger focus on character.

John Graham-Hall's Albert is a real classsic now, ideally and individually sung. No detail is wasted in this finely etched, fully explored conception. Peter Coleman-Wright is at last a Sid of the right age and class, beautifully sung too, and entirely natural in his response to the rich, alluring Nancy of Elizabeth Laurence (a

OPERA by Tom Sutcliffe

very promising voice). Phyllis Cannan's Lady Billows is commanding and makes rather a vocal flap, but fits perfectly into the stolid social cross-section against which the young are rebelling.

The London Sinfonietta's extremely accomplished playing and ready response to Knussen's conducting make this an unmitigated joy.

Graeme Jenkins conducting Simon Boccanegra has to cope with, and make up for, the Bournemouth Sinfonietta. And this is somewhat dispiriting. The strings opened the prologue encouragingly, but there were moments when Verdi's counterpoint simply got lost.

Jenkins takes some risks with slow speeds to extract maximum emotion. He is an excellent Verdian, and achieves all the right climaxes, with a generous and very musical impact. This was strong, red-blooded Verdi.

What makes this Boccanegra so superior to the summer performances though is the casting. Malcolm Donnelly is in ringing voice as the Doge, with exactly the impact and seriousness of character that Timothy Noble could not achieve. Donnelly is a very stylish Italianate baritone, and presents this constantly developing role in all its facets — a masterly performance.

Anthony Roden is pleasing, if not constantly exciting as Gabriele Adorno. Geoffrey Moses as Fiesco manages to match his often beautiful tones with sufficient Italianate attack to present a figure of authority. Marie Slorach, though she doesn't manage Carol Vanessa's immaculate trill in the role, seems a great deal more involved emotionally, and makes some thrilling sounds.

Another achievement of this excellent Boccanegra is to demonstrate that supertitles can be subtly effective in a complicated but not too wordy Verdi opera like this. The translations on the whole are not at odds with the theatrical impact of the physical performance, indeed they worked very well.

Don Giovanni is very badly blocked for this revival by Patrick Young, who never seems to get people into the right places at the right time. Martin Isepp, conducting, proves unyielding and somewhat dictatorial in handling his singers. He seemed to be aiming at a romantic interpretation, but not in the end very coherently.

GTO's Don has been around now almost too long. But some of the singing this year is well worth hearing. Robert Hayward has the right kind of voice in the title role, though he needs to relax more and allow his natural charm to shine out more.

Chaps with everything

"MY men in this film are my Marilyn Monroes," says Dorris Dorrie of the two protagonists in Men. It is an odd thing for a woman director to say, most of all a West German woman director. And one keeps on expecting something sharper than is actually delivered in this attractively presented comedy of modern sexual manners, which has carried all before it both in Germany and abroad.

The film is actually the buddy-buddy movie of all time — a fact that might have been noticed more clearly if a man had been its director. It seems to say that women are a complete enigma to most men and are likely to remain so. And that the best thing men can do about it is to chum up with each other.

CINEMA by Derek Malcolm

The leading characters are a prosperous middle-class package designer, in a fearful sulk because his wife is having her first marital affair, and the unemployed and younger graphics designer who has done the dirty deed. Taking a holiday from his firm, the package manufacturer first snoops on his rival and then takes a room at his house, without saying who he is.

It's only in the last reel that the younger man discovers his paying guest's identity. But long before that they have become friends, immersed together in the ups and downs of their emotional lives.

The film, which has been unwisely compared to those of Wilder and Lubitsch by critics in Germany and America, nevertheless has a completely different tone from your average West German film, being acted with a lightness of touch by Heiner Lauterbach and Uwe Ochsenknecht that does put one in mind of the American cinema, and directed with every sign of a sense of humour and considerable shrewdness.

Men is, in fact, the best comedy in town just now — intelligent as well as entertaining and invested by Dorrie with one thing a male director might have difficulty with imparting, which is a sense of why women find men so desirable in the first place. But feminist it is not, nor is it very mordant.

There is one scene, in particular, which sums up its more refreshing virtues and that is when the wife finally ventures into her lover's house, causing her husband first to climb out onto the roof and then to don a gorilla's mask when summoned to meet her.

The point is that he gets on with her like a house on fire once disguised as someone totally different from the bored and busy packager he was when she last knew him. And this seems to be the the main moral of the film — nothing more radical than the fact that, far from showing our true selves to the people we love, we often go in for the most elaborate disguises. By we, of course, I mean men.

BOOKS

Burying the Establishment in style

THE DICTIONARY OF NATIONAL BIOGRAPHY 1971-1980, edited by Lord Blake & C. S. Nicholls (Oxford, £60).

IT is not quite the perfect gift, being both insidious and one thousand and ten pages long. Its size and shape therefore make it unsuitable reading for the lavatory. Yet it is packed with inconsequential facts which encourage the trivial reader to turn page after page in pursuit of previously unconsidered trifles. So it occupies hours of time which might be spent on more productive activity. But they are joyous hours.

If you have a friend with an iron will (and if you have £60 to spare) you might risk sending **The Dictionary of National Biography** as either a birthday or Christmas present. Do not expect a note of thanks by return of post. Instead of fulfilling courtesy's obligation, the grateful recipient will be worrying about "DUGDALE, William Lionel first baronet and first Baron CRATHORNE (1897-1977)".

Of course, anyone on whom a Guardian reader would lavish such a bounty will already know of Sir William from "the Crichel Down Affair", the last irrationally honourable resignation in the history of British Cabinet Government. "Dugdale was a man of very high principle who firmly believed that if a Ministry made a mistake, the minister, as ultimately responsible, should resign." But one fact about the Crathorne career will almost certainly come as a surprise. "The Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries was born in Bucklands Hotel, Brook Street, London."

The Dictionary of National Biography ought to carry a mental health warning. A pointless, inconsequential detail like that can bounce around inside the brain for hours. "Maud Violet, daughter of George William Plunkenett Woodroffe of the Royal Horse Guards" was clearly not employed there as a waitress. Was she just passing by when she sensed the imminent arrival of the first baronet? Or was Bucklands really an upper class "maternity home"?

I like to think that whatever the reason, the venue was eventually a matter of deep regret to this ancient Yorkshire family. It disqualified young William from even the chance of playing cricket for the county.

It must be said — in defence of the Dictionary — that it is intended to be used with discipline and much profit. It is an invaluable work of reference for anyone who may have to write about the recently deceased great and wants to confirm the details and dates of their life and work. And it provides that essential information with the elegance and authority which is to be expected from the distinguished writers who have been recruited to provide the biographical vignettes — Roy Jenkins on Tony Crosland, John Gregg on Edward VIII, Philip Larkin on Barbara Pym, Kay Dick on Olivia Manning, E. W. Swanton on Frank Woolley and Lord Blake (the joint editor of this 1971-80 edition) on Anthony Eden.

All of them labour under the immense burden of writing about the dead of a recent decade and therefore long before the statute of literary limitation has freed them from the *nil nisi bonum* rule. The

By Roy Hattersley

indisputable facts have to be reported. But when they are either repugnant or unpalatable they are presented with a conscious lack of passion which makes the account of controversial figures hover between the emasculated and the anodyne.

It is perfectly true to write that "from 1936 onwards the BUF mounted a peace campaign, denouncing the coming war as a conspiracy organised by the Jews". And it may be true that, "the campaign was of much less importance nationally than the widespread acceptance of Nazi Germany in far more respectable circles". But the juxtaposition of the two "facts" has the undertones of an apology for MOSLEY, Sir Oswald Einald, Sixth baronet (1896-1980). It does not reflect the passions of the period.

Two other irritants protrude from the discipline necessary to encapsulate long careers into brief lives. The first is the necessity to announce (immediately after the parenthesised dates of birth and death) the trade, profession, occupation, or calling of the subject. Occasionally the description is used to do more than quote the entry in the passport. Michael Dennison makes a valuable point when he announces that COWARD, Sir Noel Pierce (1899-1973) was "actor, playwright, composer, lyricist, producer, occasional poet and Sunday painter".

But the treatment of Edward VIII (1894-1972) takes role definition rather too far. "King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the seas, Emperor of India" is a line from a proclamation, not a work of reference.

The second cause of occasional irritation is the result of the need for compression — a duty too often fulfilled by hanging a barely related fact on to a past participle. There are so many examples of sentences made up of two disparate ideas that Robert Lusty may feel that it is unreasonable to make an example of part of his encomium of BATES, Herbert Ernest (1905-1974). "Known always to his friends and even to his wife and children as HE, no other vocation than that of writer ever occurred to him except that he would have liked to be a painter as well."

I pick on Robert Lusty because the second part of his bifurcated description contains another fault that flows from the attempt to squeeze too much meaning into too few words. The qualification that HE would have liked to be a painter contradicts the assertion that no other vocation than writer ever appealed to him.

Economy of words is the poet's business. So it is not surprising that Philip Larkin shows how the single page profile should be written. PYM, Barbara Mary Crampton (1913-1980) "started writing at school, and it is remarkable that her first novel Some Tame Gazelle (1950), an amused vision of herself and her sister as fiftyish spinsters, was begun on leaving Oxford in 1934 and rejected by Jonathan Cape who were to publish it fourteen years later". Description, admiration, and reproach are all included in that single sentence.

It would, however, be wrong to suggest that The Dictionary of National Biography is only made splendid by its occasional gems. It is packed with delights of every sort. Some of them appeal only to the frivolous: the sort of person who is amused to discover that SACHS, Sir Eric Leopold Otho (1898-1979) judge, ended his legal career when "increasing deafness and sense of duty required him not to remain too long on the bench". Others are simply well written tributes.

And, of course, for those with a depressingly literal turn of mind, the Dictionary provides a very essential fact about every notable figure who died between 1971 and 1980.



John Mortimer

Interviewer as playwright

By Terry Coleman

CHARACTER PARTS by John Mortimer (Viking, £8.95).

VERY few journalists of the highest distinction earn their living principally as journalists. There are very few Nancy Banks-Smiths, Geoffrey Taylors, Frank Johnsons, Bernard Levins, Peregrine Worsthornes, or Alan Watkinses.

Apart from such notable exceptions, the best journalists tend to have made their names in the course of other pursuits. Consider Churchill, Arnold Bennett, and Enoch Powell. Nor is it any coincidence that Brian Walden, the most penetrating and lucid of political columnists, was for some years an MP, or that Julian Critchley, the most urbane of the same tribe, should be first of all, and by God-given vocation, an eternal back bencher.

So it is no surprise that John Mortimer — barrister, novelist, playwright, Rumpole-creator — should achieve easy excellence in the disappearing trade of the newspaper interview. Mr Mortimer will, I believe, be best remembered for his plays, and this book of his collected interviews from the Sunday Times is a splendid example of the interviewer as playwright.

The interview with Lord Hailsham, the one in which he says bollocks to the bench of bishops, contains a run of six pages of dialogue — not simply quotes from Lord Hailsham but dialogue between him and Mr Mortimer. It could be performed to great applause. Now Mr Mortimer once told me at a party that he does not use a tape-recorder, only pencil and paper. This frees him from the need to be too literal (which, I tell you, can be some constraint) and adds to the entertainment without, I should think, detracting from the verisimilitude.

The two pieces I remember best from their first newspaper publication are those with Christine Keeler and Lauren Bacall. Miss Keeler, discovered living in a vandalised high rise block in Fulham, mentions — lovely detail — that when Stephen Ward first asked her for her telephone number she didn't write it down but said it quickly, half hoping he'd forget. He didn't.

And Miss Bacall, asked about her love affairs, replies "*Mister* Mortimer," but then tells him she was a Jewish virgin when she first met Humphrey Bogart.

Where I have interviewed the same people, I recognise the flavour. The amiability, and the silences and the shrugs, of Mr Heath. Lord Shinwell, at 100, admiring Mrs Thatcher but still insisting that Susan Lawrence was better.

One last thing. Mr Mortimer asks people if they are happy. This is an unanswerably intimate question to ask anyone not young and feckless.

William and Mary period

By Edward Blishen

RICHMAL CROMPTON: THE WOMAN BEHIND WILLIAM, by Mary Cadogan (Allen & Unwin, £12.95).

SHE was the daughter of an affectionate parson, who told her tales of the Greeks and Romans: and she became a classics teacher. After an attack of polio, she left teaching; later she had, and recovered from, cancer. A Tory by temperament, she was never known to be in love (which a character in one of her books defined as "a mixture of what was too beautiful to be true and too ugly to be true"): was fond of nieces and nephews, and beyond them was widely known as "Auntie".

She longed to be taken seriously as a writer, and was grieved when, after 40 books, it became clear that her "quiet stories about families and village life", as she herself called them, were no longer wanted.

What *were* still wanted from Richmal Crompton were those stories, begun as potboilers, that turned the world of her own serious writing ruthlessly inside out. William Brown made his scruffy bow in 1919 in a story addressed to adults. That was in a family magazine, and he was soon taken over by children.

He was based on the author's brother, and perhaps the vigour of the invention, and William's huge popularity among Icelanders and Indians as well as Britons (though never Americans), sprang from an intensity of identification, otherwise not to be confessed, with the brother's failure to fit into the tidy aims of a morally and socially tidy family.

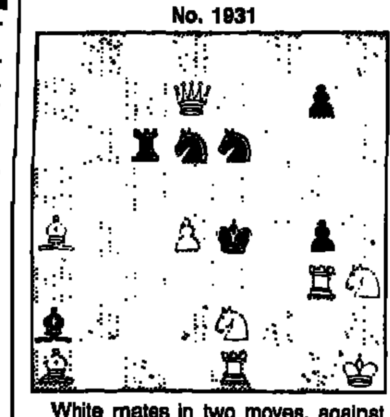
Scowling, noisy, his hair in spikes, William inhabits this otherwise (and necessarily) very quiet biography as he inhabited the Brown's home: which over the years, in surreptitious response to social change, dwindled from a spacious residence to a semi-detached.

Appraising him brings out the best in Mary Cadogan. For the rest, she tries absurdly hard to claim vividness for a life that was surely interesting precisely because it was uninteresting. Somehow out of the existence of this pleasant, unexciting woman — who in her letters and diaries displays a dreadful gift for the obvious adjective — arose an awkward and untidy comic achievement, created from the most unlikely ingredients, facetiousness prominent among them. Isn't that the real story?

Chess

By Leonard Barden

No. 1931



White mates in two moves, against any defence (by S. Krushov, Shakmatny 1939, 1st prize). A gamelike problem, but game-style checks fail to solve it.

Solution No. 1930: White K at QN1, R at KN4, Bs at QB2 and QB1, N at QR3. Black K at QB6, R at QB4, N at QR3, Ps at KN2 and KR2. Mate in three.

1 B-R6 (stops P-KR4) and if PxB 2 K-B1 and 3 N-N1 or if 1 . . . N-N5 (idea 2 K-B1 N-R7 ch) 2 R-B4 ch RxR 3 N-N5.

ANDREI SOKOLOV, 23 and contemporary of Gary Kasparov, has become the mystery grandmaster of international chess following his surprise victory in the series of world title eliminators. Sokolov had the third lowest rating at last year's Montpellier candidates tournament, but qualified for the matches, to the accompaniment of disgruntled rivals claiming he had been lucky.

He then crushed Vaganian 6-2 in the candidates' semi-finals, with a run of three consecutive wins at the start; last month he rallied from a desperate 4-6 down against Yusupov with another three wins in a row to emerge victor by 7½-6½. Now he meets Anatoly Karpov in the so-called candidates' super-final at Linares, Spain, in February 1987. Winner of this 16-game match becomes Kasparov's next title challenger later in 1987. Sokolov was the outsider against both Vaganian and Yusupov and will be even more so against Karpov. Kasparov himself in his post-Leningrad interview wouldn't even consider the possibility that his next challenger would be a different face.

Sokolov's poor image compared to the two Ks is partly due to personality factors. Karpov has always been clinical and precise, Kasparov brims with charismatic energy. When Sokolov appeared in London two years ago on bottom board for the USSR against a World team, he looked immature and uncertain and played rather badly. He has given no revealing interviews, and gives the appearance of being abstracted, casual, and without ambition.

His results and games show these surface impressions are wrong, however. *Two down with four to play* against Yusupov he produced three impressive victories, switching from positional restraint to sudden king's side attacks. At Bugojno 1986 he was the only GM rated under 2600 but tied for second and beat Karpov in their individual game. This is a pattern of fast improvement and he must have real chances against Karpov given that the ex-champion may lack the stomach for yet another Kasparov series.

Sokolov is probably the first chess grandmaster born inside the Arctic circle, at Vorkuta, where his father was a Soviet army officer. When they returned to the capital in the late 1970s. Sokolov quickly became Moscow, world junior, and USSR senior champion. At the world junior he was called lucky because his US and British rivals Benjamin and Short started badly; after the USSR final they said his victory meant little because many top GMs were absent.

But Sokolov now looks a natural winner, specially strong under pressure on a big occasion. He has also revealed a distinctive Sokolov style — king side attacks begun quite late in the middle game — in his most recent successes.

GM Andrei Sokolov — GM Anatoly Karpov
Ruy Lopez (Bugojno 1986)

1 P-K4 P-K4 2 N-KB3 N-QB3
3 B-N5 P-QR3 4 B-R4 N-B3
5 O-O B-K2 6 R-K1 P-QN4
7 B-N3 P-Q3 8 P-B3 O-O
9 P-KR3 B-N2 10 P-Q4 R-K1
11 N-N5 R-KB1 12 N-B3 R-K1

A tacit draw by repetition offer which White declines.

13 QN-Q2 B-KB1 14 B-B2 N-N1
15 P-QR4 P-B4

Theory prefers QN-Q2 to keep the option of P-QB3 after White's P-Q5. As Karpov plays it, Black has a problem QB.

16 P-Q5 QN-Q2 17 P-QN4 P-B5
18 N-B1 N-R4 19 N(3)-R2 P-N3
20 B-K3 B-K2 21 Q-Q2! R-KB1

White has stopped the freeing B-N4.

22 B-R6 N-N2 23 N-N3 K-R1

Karpov goes for defence in depth. If now 24 R-KB1 N-B3 25 P-B4? N-N1.

24 N-N4 N-B3 25 NxN BxN
26 R-KB1 Q-Q2 27 P-B4 P-R4

Better PxBP 28 BxP when P-QR4? fails to *29 PxRP RxP (P-N5 30 PxP!)* 30 PxP RxP? 31 B-R4 but Black can use K4 as a piece bastion.

28 P-B5! RPxP 29 QBPxP PxRP
30 R-B3 K-N1 31 Q-B2 B-R5
32 BxN BxN

If KxB 33 N-R5 ch!

33 RxB KxB 34 P-B6 ch K-R1
35 R(3)-R3 Q-N4 36 Q-K3 R-KN1
37 P-R4 P-N4?

Sokolov plans P-N4-5 and P-R5 with a break through to KR7 by queen and rook. Black's remedy is desperate, and B-B1 looks better.

38 PxP R-N3 39 K-B2! P-R3

Karpov finds that QR-KN1 fails to 40 R-R1 RxP (B-B1 41 RxP ch!) 41 Q-R3 RxP ch 42 K-B1 P-B6 ch 43 B-Q3.

40 R-KR1 K-R2

Here if QR-KN1 41 Q-R3 R-N1 42 QxP ch RxQ 43 RxR ch K-N1 44 R(3)-R3.

41 B-Q1 QR-KN1

Sokolov has everything under control. If QxNP 42 B-R5 Q-N7 ch 43 K-N3 RxP ch 44 QxR! PxQ 45 BxP mate.

42 Q-R3 R-KR1 43 B-R5 Resigns

If RxP 44 BxP P-R4 45 QxP ch.

Bridge

By Rixi Markus©

WHILE there are obviously certain hands on which a Weak Two opening bid by the opponents will make it difficult for you to reach your best contract, *it seems to me on balance to* be a feeble pre-emptive weapon. What is more, there are occasions on which an opposing Weak Two will actually drive you into an excellent contract which would otherwise have been hard to reach. I can think of two obvious examples from recent tournaments.

This first hand occurred during the second International Oce Bridge Tournament in Hertogenbosch, where I was fortunate enough to be playing with the Dutch champion, Hans Kreyns. Dealer East; North–South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 5 3 2
♥ 8
♦ A J 10 8 4
♣ 10 9 6 2

WEST
♠ A K 6 4
♥ 10 5
♦ K 5 3
♣ K 7 4 3

EAST
♠ 10 7
♥ A Q 7 6 4 3 2
♦ 7 2
♣ J 5

SOUTH
♠ Q J 9 8
♥ K J 9
♦ Q 9 6
♣ A Q 8

East	South (Kreyns)	West	North (Markus)
2H(1)	2NT(2)	NB	3NT
NB	NB	Dble(2)	NB
NB	NB		

(1) A Weak Two Bid.

(2) We had decided to treat Weak Two as one bids; my partner's bid of 2NT therefore showed the sort of hand on which he would have bid 1NT after an opening bid of 1H.

(3) West clearly believed that he had four tricks, and he could not see how South could possibly make nine.

West led the ten of hearts against 3NT doubled, and East went up with the ace and switched purposefully to the ten of spades. After that, my partner had little difficulty in wrapping up nine tricks — two spades, one heart, five diamonds and one club — and we scored +750 on a board on which the high-card points were divided equally between the two sides.

A second example occurred during the Cino del Duce Pairs Championship in Paris, when I was playing with Stefan Ballan.

Dealer West; North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ A 9 2
♥ 5 3
♦ Q 4
♣ A K 9 7 6 4

WEST
♠ 5
♥ A Q 10 9 4 2
♦ J 10 9 6
♣ 5 3

EAST
♠ 8 7 6 4
♥ J 8 6
♦ K 5 2
♣ J 10 8

SOUTH
♠ K Q J 10 3
♥ K 7
♦ A 8 7 3
♣ Q 2

West	North (Ballan)	East	South (Markus)
2H(1)	3C(2)	4H(3)	4NT(4)
NB	5H(5)	NB	6NT
NB	NB	NB	

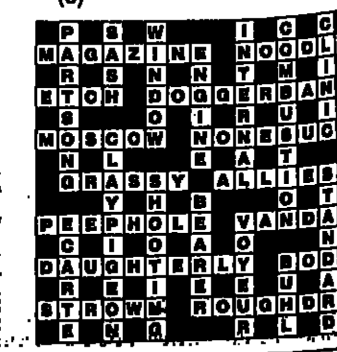
(1) A Weak Two Bid.
(2) Natural.
(3) Attempting to increase the pre-emptive effect of the 2H bid.
(4) Blackwood. I knew that my partner must have a good club suit for his vulnerable overcall at the three level, and my queen of clubs was likely to prove to be a key card. I therefore resolved to try for twelve tricks if my partner held the ace of spades.
(5) Showing two aces, which I assumed to be in clubs and spades.

The 3-2 break in clubs meant that twelve tricks did not prove difficult. Once again, I am convinced that the 2H opening bid made it easier for us to reach the excellent slam contract, for I knew that my partner's immediate overcall must show a good suit at adverse vulnerability. The bidding would have been much more difficult if West had passed as dealer and North had opened the bidding with IC.

ENIGMATIST

ACROSS
1. Big Chief Crazy Iron, standing in stone ring (8)
5. Part of the plan The Tempest, Act 1, Caliban apprehended (6)
9. Here comes Luke to stamp on envelope (8)
10. No kerb is (6)
11. Wind-flower in the city (8)
12. Cowardly medium with curve at lunch-time? (6)
14. Turned up carrying Oxford University colours as disguise (10)
18. Search us for outline (10)
22. A 10 in Tube, buses, etc in 14 (6)
23. Fall with sightseeing complete? (4, 4)
24. Money made for doing a turn in place of the orchestra (6)
25. Yorkshire river spring, won't show its age (4, 4)
26. City made out of Rock with top chipped off (6)
27. Piece of meat fell into clutches of fly (8)

DOWN
1. Outside hospital, shot a rat, squirrel or tortoise (6)
2. Is interrupting sleep to show opposition (6)
3. Not feeling as much as count (6)
4. Feature of London blurred during demonstration (6, 4)
6. It holds Roman Catholic service under a plane (8)
7. Chinese subtraction? (8)
8. & 13. Not allowed out of one's (NEWS-) room? (8, 2, 8)
15. Order (one's perfect) sweat (5-3)
16. Foreign Office love to rise with corns? (4-4)
17. Shoot occupant of hearth? (4, 4)
19. Whence comes Laconian's First Instalment? (6)
20. Love to compete with party in Spain (6)
21. Grating, ailing, without work turning up? No, the other way around (6)



BASEBALL: Matthew Engel in New York sees the Mets take the World Series

Red Sox crumple to the Mets

ONE of the great themes of American sporting history *acquired a spectacular new chapter* last week when the Boston Red Sox, the all-time masters of snatching defeat from the jaws of victory, did it yet again. It seems almost incidental that the New York Mets won the World Series and thus became champions of baseball for the second time.

On Saturday, the Red Sox were within one strike of winning the series in six games. They lost and the Mets drew level 3-3. In the decider, postponed for 24 hours by rain, the Sox went 3-0 up in the second of the nine innings only to lose 8-5.

The Mets went ahead by scoring three runs in each of the sixth and seventh innings. But the real killer was a home run over right field by Darryl Strawberry, perhaps the most disappointing New York player all week until then, after Boston had struggled back to 6-5.

The city of New York went crazy, but not as crazy as was feared. Mounted police, ringing Shea Stadium like the Fifth Cavalry, kept the trouble at the ground down to one bottle thrower, one smoke bomber and a handful of trespasses — no sky divers and no one digging up the pitch, as happened when the Mets won their division last month.

The endless stream of crapola which the media have demanded of the players all week (good grief, Lord's should hear all this) continued in the clubhouse in a new champagne drenched key. And the most bewildered non-Bostonian in town was probably Lionel Richie, who was in the midst of a soulful ballad in Madison Square Garden when his audience burst into sudden applause.

In the morning, just hours after the game finished, the Mets followed in the tradition of Lindbergh and the astronauts and had a tickertape parade along Broadway. Skyscrapers are airconditioned these days and the windows clamped shut, so the paper had to be thrown by city employees from the rooftops.

But the poor old Red Sox. This is the sixth time since the war that the team has got so close and failed, and it will lend further credence to the supposed curse of Babe Ruth, who was fatuously traded to the Yankees after winning the Sox their last world title in 1918.

After losing the sixth game John McNamara, the grey and senatorial-looking Sox manager, who sat all week in the dugout as though carved out of Mount Rushmore, finally erupted: "I don't know nothin' about history. And I don't want to hear anything about choking or any of that junk."

That was the players' line too; they kept saying they were nothing like their predecessors. But the fans knew different, and they were right: a sporting club can have a spirit of its own, regardless of whether its current employees understand it or not. Some Boston fans, I reckon, prefer it that way. Lots of teams win championships once in a while. Only the Red Sox keep losing them so spectacularly.

But in reality Boston have done incredibly well to stay so close to the Mets, who have looked probable champions for six months and have now won 116 games this year, a phenomenal figure. They are an impressive organisation all round driven by a dynamic general manager — who has charge of transfers and team building — Frank Cashen. They even have their own priest, Father Dan. His text on Sunday, to a fair-sized congregation of staff including some players, came from St Paul: "We have fought the good fight. Now a merited crown awaits us."

The best pitcher overall was Bruce Hurst of the Red Sox, who was actually voted and announced as Most Valuable Player of the series just before the Mets pulled back from the brink on Saturday. He was superb for five innings in the decider but got tired, as pitchers do, and lost his control and his award.

That went to Ray Knight, New York's injury-prone 33-year-old third baseman who a few months ago appeared to be finished in big-time sport except for being married to the golfer, Nancy Lopez. Knight is not an all-time great but he performs when it matters, or as they say here, in the clutch. And so does his team.

The standard of play has not been that wonderful all round: the show has been on the road since April; some of the players seemed very tired and, sometimes in the October evening chill, too cold.

But it has been one heck of a week for an outsider to be in New York and Boston seeing all this. It may be years before there is such a dramatic finish to a baseball season. And cricket only rarely provides such grand theatre.

Overall, though, I still think cricket is the better game. There are more variables, more possibilities, more scope for character and characters. Test matches are each as unique as fingerprints, drawing their individuality from the terrain, the surroundings and the participants.

Baseball to me does not have the *same range. But it is a great game,* and a very much better one than the adulterated form of cricket which occupies so much of our time. The sole argument for playing the absurd Sunday League is that people like to watch it. Well, people like watching baseball, too. Maybe they should play that instead.

Football results and league tables

FIRST DIVISION: Aston Villa 2, Leicester 0; Charlton 0, Arsenal 2; Chelsea 0, Watford 0; Liverpool 6, Norwich 2; Luton 1, QPR 0; Manchester United 1, Coventry 1; newcastle 0, Oxford United 0; Nottingham Forest 3, Sheffield Wednesday 2; Southampton 1, Manchester City 1; Tottenham 1, Wimbledon 2. Sunday: West Ham 1, Everton 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Nottm Forest	13	8	2	3	30	15	26
Arsenal	13	7	3	3	16	8	24
Liverpool	13	7	2	4	30	18	23
West Ham	13	6	4	3	24	22	22
Norwich	13	6	4	3	21	20	22
Everton	13	6	3	4	20	15	21
Luton	13	5	5	3	13	9	20
Coventry	13	5	5	3	13	10	20
Tottenham	13	5	4	4	13	12	19
Wimbledon	13	6	1	6	16	17	19
Sheffield Wed	13	4	6	3	25	21	18
Southampton	13	5	2	6	26	27	17
QPR	13	5	2	6	13	15	17
Charlton	13	5	2	6	15	19	17
Oxford	13	4	5	4	12	21	17
Aston Villa	13	5	1	7	19	28	16
Watford	13	4	3	6	19	18	15
Leicester	13	4	3	6	16	19	15
Manchester United	13	3	4	6	16	16	13
Chelsea	13	3	4	6	14	23	13
Man City	13	1	6	6	10	16	9
Newcastle	13	2	3	8	9	22	9

THIRD DIVISION: Blackpool 1, Bristol City 0; Brentford 1, Bolton 2; Bristol Rovers v Darlington postponed; Bury 2, Port Vale 2; Chester 0, Walsall 0; Doncaster 2, Fulham 1; Gillingham 3, Chesterfield 0; Middlesbrough 4, Bournemouth 0, Newport 1, Notts County 1; Rotherham 2, mansfield 2; Swindon 3, York 1; Wigan 2, Carlisle 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Middlesbrough	14	8	4	2	26	14	28
Gillingham	13	8	4	1	17	8	28
Bournemouth	13	8	3	2	21	14	27
Blackpool	13	7	4	2	27	13	25
Notts County	14	7	4	3	26	15	25
Swindon	13	7	3	3	24	19	24
Mansfield	12	5	6	1	16	11	21
Doncaster	14	6	2	6	21	19	20
York	14	6	2	6	19	24	20
Bristol City	12	5	4	3	20	11	19
Wigan	14	6	0	8	25	28	18
Fulham	14	4	5	5	19	22	17
Chesterfield	14	5	2	7	21	29	17
Bristol Rovers	13	4	4	5	16	18	16
Carlisle	14	4	4	6	13	20	16
Bolton	14	4	3	7	21	23	15
Port Vale	14	3	5	6	22	24	14
Brentford	13	4	2	7	17	22	14
Newport	12	3	4	5	21	23	13
Bury	14	3	4	7	17	21	23
Chester	14	1	10	3	13	18	13
Walsall	13	3	4	6	23	29	13
Darlington	13	3	4	6	15	23	13
Rotherham	14	2	3	9	10	26	9

FINE FARE SCOTTISH LEAGUE — PREMIER DIVISION: Celtic 1, Rangers 1, Dundee 0, Aberdeen 2; Falkirk 1, Clydebank 0; Hearts 1, Hibernian 1 Motherwell 1, Hamilton 1, St Mirren 0 Dundee Utd 1 Leading positions. 1. Celtic (P 15, Pts 25); 2, Dundee Utd (15, 25); 3. Rangers (15, 21).
FIRST DIVISION: Brechin 3, Dumbarton 1; Dunfermline 1, Kilmarnock 0; Montrose 0, Clyde 1; Morton 1, East Fife 1, partick 2, Airdrie 0, Queen of South 2, Forfar 1. Leading positions; 1. Dunfermline (16, 26); 2. Dumbarton (16, 23), 3. Morton (16, 20)
SECOND DIVISION: Albion 2 Raith 4; Alloa 1, East Stirling 1, Arbroath 1, Stranraer 4, Cowdenbeath 4, Stenhousemuir 1; Meadowbank 0, Stirling 1. Queen's park 3, Berwick 1; St Johnstone 2, Ayr 2 Leading positions: 1. Alloa (13, 27); 2. Raith (13 20), 3. Meadowbank (13, 18)

SECOND DIVISION: Barnsley 1, Blackburn 1; Bradford 3, Reading 0; Brighton 2, Hull 1; Grimsby 1, Millwall 0; Ipswich 3, Huddersfield 0; Leeds 1, Shrewsbury 0; Oldham 0, Portsmouth 0; Plymouth 3, Crystal Palace 1; Sheffield United 2, Sunderland 1; Stoke 0, Derby 2; West Bromwich 3, Birmingham 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Portsmouth	13	7	5	1	16	7	26
Oldham	13	7	4	2	20	12	25
Leeds United	13	7	3	3	19	11	24
Plymouth	13	6	5	2	22	16	23
Ipswich	13	6	4	3	21	16	22
WBA	13	6	3	4	17	15	21
Derby County	13	6	3	4	16	14	21
Sunderland	13	5	5	3	19	17	20
Sheffield United	13	4	6	3	16	15	18
Crystal Palace	13	6	0	7	17	23	18
Brighton	13	4	5	4	13	13	17
Grimsby	12	4	5	3	11	12	17
Hull	13	5	2	6	13	18	17
Reading	13	4	3	6	23	21	15
Bradford	12	4	3	5	16	17	15
Millwall	13	4	2	7	16	16	14
Birmingham	13	3	5	5	18	20	14
Shrewsbury	13	4	1	8	12	18	13
Huddersfield	13	3	3	7	12	20	12
Blackburn	11	3	2	6	13	16	11
Barnsley	13	2	5	6	11	16	11
Stoke	13	3	2	8	8	16	11

FOURTH DIVISION: Burnley 0, Peterborough 0, Hartlepool 3, Northampton 3; Hereford 1, Aldershot 0, Lincoln 3, Tranmere 1; Preston 2, Exeter 1. Scunthorpe 3, Wrexham 3; Swansea 1, Rochdale 0 **FRIDAY:** Cambridge Utd 0, Crewe 3; Colchester 3, Wolverhampton 0, halifax 1, Cardiff 1; Orient 1, Stockport 0; Southend 4, Torquay 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Northampton	14	11	2	1	38	21	35
Swansea	14	8	3	3	25	15	27
Colchester	14	7	4	3	26	19	25
Southend	13	7	3	3	24	13	24
Preston	13	7	3	3	21	17	24
Exeter	14	5	8	1	19	8	23
Wrexham	12	6	4	2	26	15	22
Lincoln	14	5	5	4	17	20	20
Crewe	14	4	7	3	25	19	19
Tranmere	14	5	4	5	19	19	19
Wolves	14	6	1	7	16	18	19
Orient	13	6	1	6	18	19	19
Aldershot	15	5	3	7	22	22	18
Scunthorpe	13	4	4	5	19	18	16
Cardiff	13	3	7	3	14	17	16
Hereford	14	4	4	6	15	19	16
Burnley	14	4	4	6	14	20	16
Cambridge	13	3	6	4	21	22	15
Peterborough	14	3	4	7	16	19	13
Rochdale	12	2	6	4	11	15	12
Torquay	14	2	6	6	15	26	12
Halifax	14	3	3	8	13	24	12
Hartlepool	14	1	7	6	15	24	10
Stockport	13	1	3	9	5	27	6

New South Africa tour threat

SOUTH AFRICAN plans to organise a full-scale rugby union tour by British and Irish players to Lions' standard next summer were confirmed at the the weekend by Johan Claasen, chairman of Ellis Park stadium in Johannesburg, who masterminded the controversial "rebel" tour by the so-called New Zealand Cavaliers last summer.

In an exclusive story in The Guardian Mr Claasen said that he was hoping to bring to South Africa a British Isles Lions' standard team. "Simply on commercial grounds we could not take a chance and bring out a sub-standard team," he told The Guardian's Paul Martin. He also confirmed plans to organise a tour by Australian players next July after the World Cup, which is being held in Australasia.

The deal to organise a rebel British tour was agreed in London last month at a time when elsewhere in the city South Africa's *Rugby Board was giving to the* International Board a "solemn, unconditional, and irrevocable" undertaking that there would be no recurrence of the Cavaliers style tour. But Danie Craven, the board chairman, who believes that there is more to be gained for his sport, which is increasingly isolated through the apartheid issue, by toeing the International Board line, is said to be facing a near irresistible tide of commercial pressure, rugby fanaticism, and political chicanery.

☆ ☆ ☆

DOMESTICALLY, there was a world record international occasion in Dublin at the weekend when Ireland beat Romania 60-0, scoring 10 tries on the way. It was the largest margin in a rugby union international, beating by 33 points Ireland's previous best score, against Australia in 1979. The previous highest score internationally had been 49 by Wales in 1910. The only record not broken was the 11 tries scored in one match by Wales in 1909.

The Irish running and handling were masterly and gave them a lead of 22-0 by halftime. It was then obvious that the Romanians, who in the past decade had shown signs of breaking through internationally, were bereft of ideas and, in the end, spirit. In the second half Ireland ran riot, led by three tries from Crossan.

England's rugby players went two better on the same day in winning 62-15 in Portugal. But it was not a formal international, being merely part of a training session in the sun for more than 30 English international hopefuls.

☆ ☆ ☆

IN RUGBY LEAGUE the Australians continued their winning ways, beating Halifax 36-2 in midweek and St Helens 32-8 at the weekend. Halifax, the League champions, held the tourists for 19 minutes, but then fell to the familiar flood of tries and points. The Australians scored seven tries to bring the total to 46 in their opening six matches. Against St Helens they had another seven tries in recording their 26th consecutive victory on British soil since 1978.

Rugby League lost one of the more colourful and controversial of its characters during the week with the death of Eddie Waring, the former BBC television commentator, aged 76. He was the commentator for the first televised game, Great Britain v New Zealand, in 1951 and held the job for the next 30 years. His witticisms gave him national fame beyond the game, but people within the Northern-based game often were irritated that their game was not given the same style of serious treatment accorded by the BBC to rugby union.

☆ ☆ ☆

ENGLISH SOCCER faced a novel problem last week when two Portsmouth players were ordered from their own ground by the police after officers had claimed that the players had verbally abused a linesman during the second half of a match at the ground. A police spokesman said later that had the abuse occured during the first half the players would have been dealt with at half-time, which could have meant that Portsmouth began the second half with only nine men.

Gordon Taylor, secretary of the Professional Footballers' Association, said that if police extended their role at matches as they had at Portsmouth the game would be reduced to farce. The police role at matches was to deal with spectator hooliganism.

☆ ☆ ☆

IN LEAGUE soccer action at the weekend Nottingham Forest stayed at the head of the English First Division by beating Sheffield

Alan Dunn's DIARY

Wednesday 3-2, but Norwich City lost their second place when they were stylishly put in their place by the champions, Liverpool, 6-2. It was the second convincing display in the week by Liverpool, who had beaten Leicester City 4-1 in the Littlewoods Cup. London clubs Arsenal and West Ham United had similar successes. Arsenal beat Manchester City 3-1 in the Cup as a prelude to winning 2-0 at Charlton Athletic to move into second place in the First Division. West Ham went through in the Cup 3-2 at Watford before beating Everton 1-0 in a live televised match on Sunday.

☆ ☆ ☆

IN SCOTLAND the meeting of the two Glasgow giants, Celtic and Rangers, attracted the biggest crowd in Britain on the day, 60,000, but left honours even at 1-1. The game was played at an exhausting pace, one that left the Rangers manager, Graeme Souness, commenting: "I don't think you could go to England very often and see a match as good as that." Dundee United took advantage of Celtic's dropping a home point to draw level at the top of the Premier Division after winning 1-0 at St Mirren.

☆ ☆ ☆

ENGLAND'S touring cricketers recovered quickly from their first defeat in Australia by winning twice last week. The first was a one day win by nine wickets over a South Australia Country XI. The second was the sterner stuff over four days against South Australia at Adelaid. England won inside the time by five wickets after the home team had set the pace with a first innings of 305 for eight dec. England's response of 407 included centuries for Lamb, 105, and Whitaker, who scored 108 on his first appearance for England in Australia. Emburey was England's main bowler in restraining South Australia to 269 in their second innings, leaving England to score 169 for the loss five wickets, led by 55 from Lamb and 63 from Broad.

☆ ☆ ☆

WORLD CRICKET last week was dominated by the Test match at Faisalabad, where Pakistan beat the mighty West Indies by 186 runs. It was only West Indies third loss in 54 Tests, and included their lowest ever innings score in Test cricket, 53 in their second innings after being set 240 to win the first Test. Abdul Qadir's leg spin did the damage, with six for 16 in that second innings, but Wasim Akram was named man of the match for career-best figures of six for 91 and 6.

☆ ☆ ☆

BRITISH sport suffered two heavy defeat from the United States last week. In lawn tennis there was a 7-0 rout, the first in Britain for 34 years for the US in the women's Wightman cup at London's Albert Hall. The Americans now lead 49-10 in the series and have not lost since 1978, but they insist that the series must go on. In swimming the US beat Britain by 261-202, winning only seven events. Tiffany Cohen was the most successful US swimmer, with three victories.